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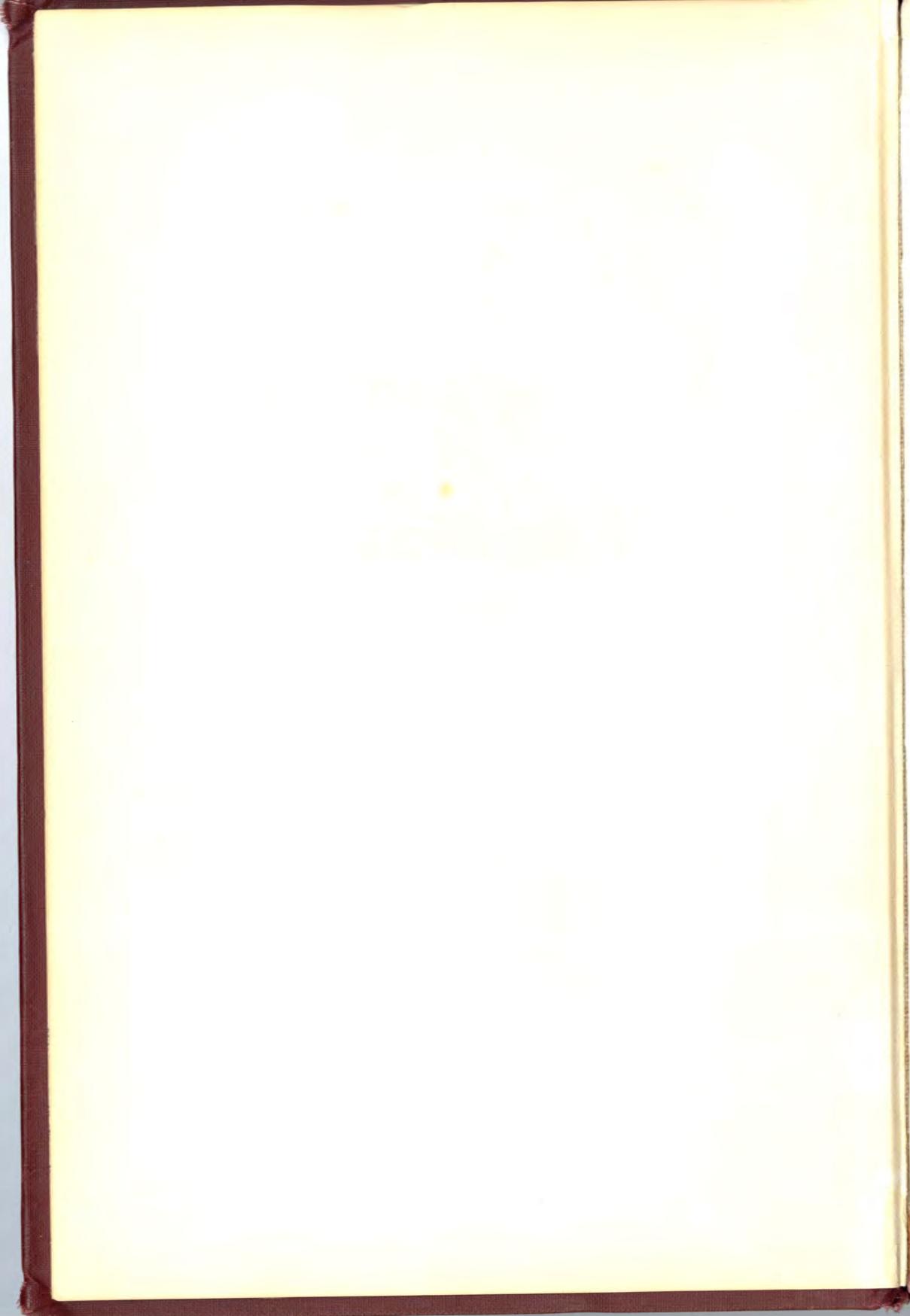
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The Lives and Times  
of  
Kingswood  
in  
Alabama  
1817-1890

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To my husband, Kermit,  
and to our daughter, Judy.



## *Acknowledgements*

One seldom completes a project without the help of others. Such is the case with this book. Much appreciation goes to the University of Montevallo Library staff—Louise Owens, Jean Edwards, Julia Rotenberry, and Mary Frances Tipton — for their help in locating historical information; to Jean Thomason of Samford University's special collection staff; to Marcia Sears for early newspaper clippings; to Kenneth Penhale for a copy of the Shelby County court records of 1823; and to the helpful and courteous employees of the Department of Archives and History in Montgomery.

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To faculty members Sarah Palmer, Frances Cannon, Mary Larkin (retired) and others who listened and gave encouragement and to the many students who inquired and exhibited interest in the assemblage of this material, the writer is grateful.

A special thanks goes to Joan Gordon, the president's secretary, who helped in collecting the initial material and who supervised the typing of the manuscript—most of which she typed herself.

Of such ingredients as mentioned above, the project was formulated and completed. Without them, there is doubt. Thus, the appreciation to all who contributed in any way.



"A house is built of logs and stone  
Of tiles and posts and piers,  
A home is built of loving deeds  
That stand a thousand years."

*Victor Hugo*



## Introduction

Enclosed within a wall of blue limestone boulders stand the gravestones of some members of an illustrious family who once proudly called this acreage home. Several knarled old cedar trees and a water oak stand guard over the small plot of earth wherein the remains lie.

This small cemetery is located in the midst of a growing and active university campus. Hundreds of students tread the nearby paths and roads, but relatively few are aware of the relationship between the gravestones and the acreage surrounding it. Occasionally there are those who pause to gaze upon the tombs or to enter the gate and read the inscriptions which reveal a brief summary of the lives of those whose story will unfold in the pages of this book. For the effort, this is what one finds:

Edmund King—was born in Virginia—moved to Georgia and married Nancy Ragan in 1812—Came to Alabama in 1817 and settled on this place where he died June 28, 1863 in the 82 year of his age. He was a wise and just man—a kind neighbor—a patriotic citizen and was for more than fifty years an earnest and consistent member of the Baptist Church.

\* \* \*

Sacred to the memory of Mrs. Nancy King—consort of Edmund King who departed this life September 10, 1842 in the 49th year of her age. As a wife, mother, and Christian she was a bright example. *"Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God."*

\* \* \*

Here lies the remains of Mrs. Susan D. King, second wife of Edmund King and daughter of Joshua and Sylvia Ward. Was born in Bertie County, N. Carolina and died June 22, 1850 in the 34th year of her age.

\* \* \*

Lylleton King—1827—September 1848. Accidentally shot by his brother while deer hunting. (Seventh child of Edmund King)

\* \* \*

Nathaniel Ragan King  
1831 — 1863

*"He was a reliable man."*

(Eighth child of the King family who died of tuberculosis  
at age 32)

Frank Ragan King  
March 10, 1840 — October 8, 1884

\* \* \*

Elizabeth King  
Wife of George D. Shortridge. Died November 22, 1902  
aged 88 years.

*"Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God."*

\* \* \*

George D. Shortridge  
died July 29, 1870. Aged 55 years  
*"He was a wise and just husband and honest man."*

\* \* \*

Eli Shortridge  
Killed in Battle of Seven Pines, Virginia  
June 30, 1862, aged 18 years  
*"He died for the southland he loved so well."*

\* \* \*

Frank Forrester Shortridge  
Killed in Battle near Atlanta, Georgia  
August 24, 1864  
*"A bright example of southern chivalry."*

\* \* \*

George D. Shortridge, Jr.  
July 23, 1837 — August 20, 1868  
*"Thou has left us lonely."*

\* \* \*

Our Darling Morgan — 1882 - 1884  
*"Home never had a bright or better baby than Mordie  
and heaven has no sweeter spirit."*  
(Baby son of Frank Ragan and Fannie Snodgrass King)

Only a short distance away stands the proud old house which has recently been restored to as near authenticity as knowledge and research could provide. It was here that the prominent King family lived, loved, and languished over an important period in Alabama history. Were the old trees skirting the property able to communicate there would undoubtedly be many more interesting stories concerning the occupants of the "mansion house" but with limited information, the research compiled here will be more or less vignettes of individuals—their lives, and contributions to the time and place in which they lived. For interest, and a little more insight of events occurring during the span of occupation of this house, historical highlights of Alabama figures and events have been added.

Laying no claim to title of historian or learned scholar, the writer wishes merely to share her interest and results of research with others of similar interests who appreciate and seek to keep alive our wonderful American heritage.

Recognizing and renewing respect for the contributions of early pioneers in Alabama, and in the area of Montevallo in particular, has been a great reward of this goal. It is sincerely hoped that the reader will derive as much pleasure from scanning these pages as the writer has had in putting them together.



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King House (on U.M. campus)

✓

## *Chapter One*

On August 10, 1782, a son was born to Edmund King, Sr. and his third wife, Elizabeth Woodson Thomas. He was christened Edmund, Junior. It is interesting to note that the "Junior" title would be bestowed on the fourth son rather than the older sons, Robert, William, or James. Sisters Sarah and Mary (sometimes called Polly) made up the household when Edmund, Jr. arrived. Later there would be Elizabeth, Nancy, Joicy, and Payton to complete this generation of Kings. It will be noted as this history unfolds how often these family names are repeated.

Edmund King, Junior — a name to be remembered in early central Alabama. Who was he? Why and how did he come to settle in our midst? Research on his background reveals the following information:

Edmund King, Sr. was one of ten children born to William King and Elizabeth Edwards. The Edwards family was one of the most prominent of Wales, being traced back to Sir Griffith Lloyd, a direct descendant of Roderick the Great, King of Wales in 824. William King can be traced back to Devonshire, England where in the fourteenth century John King married Agnes Mortimer, daughter of Lady Phillip Plantaganet and granddaughter of the Earl of March. In the early seventeenth century, a Captain William King, the first of the name King to visit the shores of Virginia, was a vice-admiral in command of the ship, "Diamond," on voyages from England to America. On one such trip, his vessel was wrecked in a storm near the English coast and he was lost at sea. After his untimely death, King's wife and sons came to Virginia to live. Thus both the King and Edwards families had rich heritages.

Other than Edmund, who was the oldest child, there were: George, Withers, William, Elizabeth, Robert, Philip, Thomas, John Edward, and Nimrod.

Edmund, Jr.'s mother's side of the family was noted also. The Thomas family was one of great antiquity in Wales. Many with the

name distinguished themselves in various walks of life throughout England and America. William Thomas was Vestryman in both Halifax Co. and Pittsylvania Co., Virginia; served as Justice of the Peace, (1769); was a Patriot in the Revolutionary War; appointed Captain of the Militia during the years 1767 to 1770. It is said he owned and enjoyed a large library which included Stith's *History of Virginia and Law Books*. Evidently he acquired much wealth as records show he made generous gift deeds to his sons—one of which received 648 acres as his portion. Son-in-law Edmund received five thousand pounds in the settlement of the Thomas estate.

William's wife, Mary Woodson, was a descendant of Sarah Winston of Devonshire and Dr. John Woodson who was graduated from John's College, Oxford, England, came to America on the ship *George* in 1619 as surgeon to the company of soldiers and settled on the James River in Virginia. Children of William Thomas and Mary Woodson numbered eleven—two of whom were wives of Edmund King, Sr. His first marriage was to a Miss Beavers but no other information was available. In 1770 he married Mary Thomas who was the mother of his first-born son, Robert. After her death, he married her sister Elizabeth Woodson who became the mother of nine children, as have been named above. The Edmund King family became quite prominent in his native state of Virginia. Being an English Colony, the Church of England was established by law as the form of worship for the people of the colony. The Administrator of Affairs of the Parish was in control of a local body known as The Vestry, which was composed of the foremost men residing in the parish, maybe from point of intelligence, wealth or social position. As the principal guardians of the public morals they were looked up to as the models of all that was most polished and cultured in their communities. It was the duty of The Vestry to care for the poor, collect fees for that purpose, collect taxes, and mark boundary lines of property owners. And so it was that Edmund, Sr. was appointed Vestryman of Antrim Parish, Halifax County in 1762. He was commissioned to build a bridge over Bannister River which provided opportunity for another display of talent. He was appointed Processioner in 1768 and was frequently referred to as "Gentleman Justice." When the courthouse had to be moved a short distance away, Edmund and his wife deeded two acres of land for the new courthouse and sold lots around the same with privileges of using King's Spring. After the county seat was moved, he sold his home place there to his son-in-law, Adam Toot. As a captain in the Revolutionary War, he served in the Virginia State Militia and helped to furnish supplies for same. After the death of his wife, he moved to Georgia where he received two land grants of 500 acres each (1791) and later he acquired 161 acres on waters of the Oconee, Hudson, and Broad Rivers in Franklin County. On July 17, 1817, he died, at which time son Edmund, Jr. and son-in-law William Bush became administrators of his estate. According to an appraiser, his personal property amounted to \$7,893.75, which included 44 hogs, 40 sheep, 24 cows, and 17 slaves.

As a young man, Edmund, Jr., while living in Franklin County, Georgia, went into the mercantile business with his brother-in-law Francis Murphy. When this partnership dissolved, Murphy and wife (Mary King) moved to Pickens County, Alabama, while Edmund Jr. moved to Griffin, Georgia. It was here that he met and married Nancy Ragan (1811), daughter of Jonathan Ragan. Nancy was a lovely and intellectual young lady and Edmund, at age thirty, knew what he wanted and felt financially able to take care of a wife and family.

The first baby, a son, arrived as a New Year's gift in 1813. He was named William Woodson. A little daughter, Louisa, was born in 1815.

\* \* \*

The Revolutionary War had left its impact on this area so Edmund decided to search for a more stable and desirable place in which to till the soil and rear his family. With two field hands he began his quest for a more promising land.

His tour of inspection took him to New Orleans and Mobile but neither seemed to fit his need. He then came up the Alabama River to Selma, where he proceeded on horseback to what is now Montevallo.

What would a newcomer to this area find? What were his chances to succeed? What did the future hold? I'm sure these questions were asked of himself by Edmund King as he approached this new territory which was to be his home.

After the treaty of Fort Jackson in 1814, many soldiers who had participated in routing of the Red Sticks returned with their families to live in this area. One such soldier was Jesse Wilson who was the first white man to settle here. The village thus became known as Wilson's Hill, and it was all of two years old when Edmund King pushed his way northward from Selma.

The United States Congress had just created the Alabama Territory from land removed from the Mississippi Territory, which had just become a state. President James Monroe appointed Dr. William Wyatt Bibb territorial governor and the capital was at the Spanish Fort, St. Stephens.

Edmund King liked what he found at Wilson's Hill. The area seemed to be especially favored by nature. In addition to Shoals Creek and tributaries of the Coosa and Cahaba, there were many fine springs. Fruit trees and nut-bearing trees were in abundance. No doubt a man of King's vision and determination could see the beauty and advantages of this available land and could profit by his decision. He purchased large tracts of land from the government and Cherokee Indians and his new venture was underway.

An article in the *Alabama Baptist*, June 16, 1859, describes the event in these words:

The first settlement of whites in this region was made in 1815 by some of the men who became acquainted with these beautiful valleys during the Indian Wars. These men planted corn in little fields without fences for there was no stock to be fenced out and as new settlers came in rapidly, their corn sold rapidly. For one year it sold for five dollars per bushel. The first settler was Jesse Wilson. The site is picturesque and interesting. The land rises into mountainous elevations all around the valley which contains the town and beneath a limestone cliff on the beautiful Shoal Creek gushes out a spring, limpid and cool — one of the most delightful natural fountains in any country. It was here that some gentlemen of this state, now very wealthy, began their fortune with a bag full or two of goods as their stock in trade.

Edmund King had indeed planted and harvested a good corn crop. With the help of Indian friends he erected a relatively crude, handhewn cabin to which he could bring his family for the time being. No doubt he had visions of something better in the future.

Although the Creek Indian War had ended three years before, there were still marauding bands of Indians who had to be dealt with at times, and during rainy weather travel was anything but easy, especially when moving household belongings, as well as women and children. But Edmund King had this task to do and with high hopes for the future he set out to remove his little family to their new home. Perhaps he might never have accomplished his goal without the help of his good friend, William Weatherford, who so generously gave of his time and know-how to help a newcomer to the territory. This close friendship may seem odd considering the role Weatherford is alleged to have played in the massacre at Ft. Mims, but because of this friendship and aid to King, a brief biography of Weatherford might shed a little more light.

\* \* \*

William Weatherford, a Creek Indian of mixed Scotch and French blood was born on the east bank of the Alabama River opposite the town of Coosada. Recorded dates differ as to the time but a reasonable one is 1765. His father, Charles Weatherford, was a Scotch trader who came from Georgia and settled on the Alabama River where he built a store and a race track to race his prize horses. William's mother, Sehoy McGillivay, was the granddaughter of Sehoy, a full blooded Creek girl who was the daughter of the ruling House of the Wind.

During his boyhood and youth he had the training of the Creek people. He became an expert in their games and dances and skilled in the use of the rifle and the bow and arrows. Having access to his father's stables, he became an expert in horsemanship.

There are differing opinions as to why Weatherford joined the Red Sticks during the Creek War. Perhaps the age old "bring up a

child in the way he should go" had its influence. Some historians believe he really opposed the war. Another view is that he was most conscious of being a "half-breed" and felt that he would be rejected by the American frontiersman. Some say that he knew he had the ability to lead and he knew the needs of "his people" had to be met. At any rate, whatever his motive, he cast his lot with the Red Sticks. When the warriors who had succumbed to Tecumseh's plea to make war against the white man decided to fight, the voting was done by throwing a tomahawk to the white or red side of the council fire. Hence the name "Red Sticks."

Thus did William Weatherford become one of the most colorful participants of the Red Stick war party. His bravery and daring feats became legend in Alabama history. Perhaps the most exciting incident was when General Claiborne was routing the Indians during the Battle of the Holy Ground. It seems that Weatherford, who became known as Red Eagle, was the last of the Indians to retreat. Riding Arrow, his horse of great strength and speed, the daring warrior escaped by riding down a ravine to the banks of the Alabama River, where he jumped in and swam to the other side. Tales were told and retold of this thrilling sight of horse and rider jumping from the bluff in one mighty leap while being fired upon, and swimming away in the river below.

Most writers agree that Weatherford did not desire the massacre of Fort Mims. It is said that he made an eloquent plea to the warriors to spare the women and children, but as often happens in the excitement of rioting mobs, reason was destroyed and the warriors scalped and burned 517 men, women, and children. Quoting the words on a marker in Baldwin County, it was the "most brutal massacre in American history."

Weatherford assisted in setting up the defense of Horseshoe Bend where the red men were to make one last desperate effort to keep their lands. Not expecting to be attacked so soon, Weatherford left for a brief period during which time the decisive battle occurred. After so many of their warriors were killed, the Red Sticks made few attempts to rally. Some surrendered, others escaped to Florida. Realizing that further resistance was useless, and to spare more lives, Weatherford decided to surrender. Boldly, he rode up to General Jackson's tent and offered himself to be killed if the General so desired — but with a plea for the lives and safety of women and children who were hiding in the woods without food or shelter. It is said he was never more eloquent when he stated, "I exerted myself in vain to prevent the massacre at Fort Mims. I am done fighting. The Red Sticks are nearly all killed. If I could fight you any longer, I would most heartily do so. Send for the women and children. They never did you any harm. But kill me if the white people want it done."

Some of Jackson's soldiers wanted to do just that and shouts of, "kill him," could be heard repeatedly. Jackson, for whatever other

reasons, admired the chief's courage and responded in emphatic words, "Any man who would kill as brave a man as this, would rob the dead!"

Following this episode, Jackson realized the chief's life was in danger and took the colorful Red Eagle to the Hermitage, his home in Nashville, Tennessee, where Weatherford remained for nearly a year. He later returned to Alabama and lived a useful and helpful life.

History has been most generous to the colorful Weatherford. A. B. Meeks made him the hero of his poem "Red Eagle" and stated that he was one of the most remarkable men, whether savage or civilized, which the American hemisphere had produced. Picket, another early historian had this to say, "He was a man of intellect and a commanding person. His bearing was generally dignified and was coupled with an intelligent expression which led strangers to suppose they were in the presence of no ordinary man. His eyes were large, dark, brilliant, and flashing. He was one of nature's noblemen and a man of strict honor and unsurpassed courage."

Weatherford was the father of six children. After the death of his first wife, Mary Moniac, by whom he had a son Charles, he married Sophrena Thlotco, a full blooded Creek Indian and son William was born to them. After her death, he married Mary Stiggins in whom the white blood predominated. Of this marriage four children were born. An interesting note here reveals at this marriage, Weatherford was attended as groomsman by Samuel Dale, the great frontiersman and Indian fighter. Thus, he must have had a touch of charisma! His biography reveals that he died "from the effects of fatigue, produced by a desperate bear hunt." Like the King family, his descendants have made a lasting contribution to Alabama history.

It is not surprising then that William Weatherford became a friend and protector of Edmund King. It is not known whether the acquaintance was made during King's journey to Alabama or after his arrival but whenever it happened, Weatherford admired the new resident enough to offer his help in moving the King family from Georgia to their new home in the Alabama Territory.\* After accepting Weatherford's kind offer, the group proceeded to Georgia to undertake what in those days was a rather difficult task. With two covered wagons filled with family possessions, a family carriage, and fifteen slaves, the group pushed painstakingly along the rugged frontier to their future home. The men rode on horseback and checked frequently for any danger that might be lurking nearby.

Upon reaching the Alabama River, Weatherford had to leave the group but he sent a trusted warrior to provide safe conduct as well as to guide them along the most favorable route to their new home.

\*Verified by Fred King, grandson of Edmund Jr., in files at the Department of History and Archives, Montgomery, Alabama.

The journey ended at last and soon the little family was settled and feeling quite at home in their new surroundings. Much work had to be done that first year and all joined in to help. Before the year ended, daughter Elizabeth, named for Edmund's sister, was born (1817). Nancy Ragan King now had three babies to care for, in addition to the many chores required of a pioneer woman who had the task of setting up housekeeping in a new home.



The Parlor of King House. Portrait of Edmund King Jr. (left) who built the house in 1823. (Right) Portrait of Bessie Mussey—great great granddaughter of Edmund King Jr.

## *Chapter Two*

A proposal to create Shelby County by act of the Alabama Territorial Legislature February 7, 1817 was made and this act was approved in 1818, whereby the county was named for Isaac Shelby, Kentucky's soldier-governor who had been a revolutionary hero and Indian fighter.

When the government land offices were opened and surveyors charted the land, farmers and others who lived on choice lands rushed in to apply for and receive title. Edmund King was among those who greatly desired such property. Newcomers did likewise and the population of the territory began to show growth.

Not too far away from the King plantation, a group of people from France was getting adjusted to a new land also. The area was called White Bluff, which later became Demopolis. At the close of the Napoleonic Wars many of Napoleon's generals and followers were exiled. It is said that Napoleon himself had considered the move. These Frenchmen asked the United States to grant them land on which to colonize. This request was granted with the understanding that they would plant grape vineyards and olive orchards. Ninety-two thousand, one hundred sixty acres of former Indian lands on the Tombigbee River were granted at the cost of two dollars an acre. The time limit to pay for this was fourteen years. The conditions were agreed upon and the "Vine and Olive Colony" was established.

When the colorful group arrived in the Mobile harbor, their ship was slightly wrecked during a storm and they had to be rescued. Before continuing their journey up the Mobile and Tombigbee Rivers, the people of Mobile entertained them lavishly. Perhaps this was to be their last extravagant celebration because this combination of land, climate, and people didn't add up to happiness and success. These cultured people were well educated but knew little about farming. Grapes ripened too fast in the hot sun and olive trees died in the sometimes severe winters. Some writers say the ladies were lovely to look at in their fine silk gowns and satin slippers but these fine clothes didn't go with the crude cabins and hard work needed to sur-

vive. The courtly manners of the gentlemen were not enough equipment to cope with the demands of the frontier so it was soon evident that the young colony would not endure. It was hard to admit defeat but by groups they disbanded. Some went to Mobile and New Orleans; others went back to France. Only a few remained to conquer the hard life of the frontier.

Life nowhere in the territory was easy. The first business at hand was to provide food and shelter for one's family. Other interests could come later. There were those, however, who found time to participate in the political activities of the territory and although there were no political parties as such, there were issues to be discussed and pondered.

On July 5, 1819, the Alabama Constitutional Convention met at Huntsville to draft a constitution for the proposed new state. The delegates represented some of the most knowledgeable people in the territory. Of the fifteen members present, seven were from south Alabama, seven from north Alabama, one, George Philips, was from Shelby County. On December 14 of the same year, the United States Congress granted statehood to Alabama. Huntsville was selected as the capital site and William Wyatt Bibb was elected to serve as her first governor.

Excitement was abound and hit a new high when President James Monroe paid an unexpected visit to the new state. Huntsville hummed with activity. Clement C. Clay was selected to invite the president to a dinner, presided over and assisted by Clay and Henry Minor. The dinner was a big success and one account of this momentous occasion states: "After the cloth was removed, twenty-four toasts were drunk, accompanied by the discharge of cannon and appropriate songs."\* The new state and its governmental participants had reason to be proud. They showed Mr. President they could entertain as well as promote the business of their state.

The assembly adjourned December 17, 1819, so as to give the members who lived a long distance time enough to get home for Christmas.

\* \* \*

In the little house on Wilson's Hill, the King family celebrated Alabama's statehood around an open fire. It was perhaps quite different from the Huntsville celebration. It was most likely done by reading the scripture and followed by prayer because Edmund King was a religious man. Records show he was baptised about 1810 before leaving Georgia and he worked for the church there. After moving to Alabama he lost no time in affiliating with the Baptist in the Alabama Territory. He was present, and assisted, when the oldest Baptist Association in the state was formed on October 3, 1818

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\*William Brantley. *Three Capitals.*

at the site of the Cahaba Valley Church.\* As will be noted frequently, Mr. King made many contributions to religious and civic causes, both personal and financial.

Population in the state was increasing. When the first federal census was taken in 1820, Alabama had 127,901 people and of this number 42,450 were slaves. Shelby County was not one of the heavy slave populated counties but there were about 500 free negroes and some of these owned slaves themselves.

Among the new citizens of Alabama was daughter, Lucinda, fourth child of the Edmund Kings. The census of the 1820 King family was thus listed:

|           |                          |
|-----------|--------------------------|
| E. King — | 2 white males over 21    |
|           | 1 white male under 21    |
|           | 1 white female over 21   |
|           | 3 white females under 21 |
|           | free people of color — 0 |
|           | slaves — 16              |
|           | total household — 23     |

There is no information as to who the white male over 21 was (other than father Edmund). It was probably a tutor for the children as was one so designated in a later census. Both father and mother King were great believers in education and spared no effort or money in seeing that their children obtained the best. In fact, mother Nancy taught son William, at age four, to read from an old blue-back Webster Speller and from the large print of the King James Bible. She taught him arithmetic by making him count, add, and subtract, the squares in her apron and patch work quilts.

\* \* \*

The state was making progress. Mail was carried by stagecoach when roads were passable. Safety was still a factor when traveling. Moving and loitering along the roads leading into the Indian country was a motley crowd. Some were seeking fortunes, others were looking for adventure. As in movies of old, thieves and robbers frequently relieved travelers of their money and other personal possessions. There were still resentful Indians to be reckoned with which made for danger. All of which had the militia frequently in action.

The capital of the state was moved to Cahaba which pleased Governor Bibb very much. Although he had worked diligently for this, he never lived to see the project completed. While riding over his plantation in Autauga County, he was thrown from his horse and suffered a contusion. Being in delicate health already, this accelerated the decline and he died in the fortieth year of his life. To honor him, the county of Cahaba was renamed Bibb County which still bears the name today.

---

\*Southwest Baptist. June, 1859.

For some idea of how far the dollar went in the early 1800's, tavern rates at the seat of government were:

|                                    |   |                    |
|------------------------------------|---|--------------------|
| Breakfast, dinner or supper        | — | 50c                |
| Feeding horse with corn and fodder | — | 50c                |
| Feeding horse with corn only       | — | 37 $\frac{1}{2}$ c |
| Night's lodging                    | — | 12 $\frac{1}{2}$ c |

The Town Council was authorized to collect toll at the Cahaba River Bridge as follows:

|                              |                   |
|------------------------------|-------------------|
| Each led or loose horse      | 3c                |
| Each head of cattle          | 2c                |
| Each head of sheep           | 2c                |
| Each head of hogs            | 1c                |
| For man and horse            | 6 $\frac{1}{4}$ c |
| Loaded wagon and team        | 50c               |
| Wagon and team not loaded    | 25c               |
| Four wheel pleasure carriage | 25c               |

In the Governor's Race of 1821, Israel Pickens was the man elected to be Alabama's "Moses" and lead her out of the wilderness. He tried to do just that. The assembly of 1821 was not spectacular but produced practical and useful results. Governor Pickens controlled it fairly and firmly. The appropriations for the session were interesting: \*Governor's salary \$2,000 per year. William Q. Gamble, doorkeeper of the House, \$269.25 for stationery furnished both Houses. Mathew McClellan got \$113.87 for stationery and wood furnished the Senate. The comptroller was allowed \$63.25 for postage and \$75.00 was appropriated to buy a desk for the State Treasurer.

The year 1822 brought more and better crops. The growing season had been good and the spirit of the people was rising. Although the first steamboat was built several years before, it was not until now that much water transportation was in effect. There were about 200 landings along the Alabama River and even more on the Tombigbee-Warrior Waterway. Crowds along the landing would cheer the arrival of a particular steamboat and often the speed of such would be discussed as enthusiastically as we discuss football and baseball scores today. Now the cotton planter could count on a steamboat to carry his crop to Mobile where it could either be sold or else transferred to ocean-going steamers for New England and Europe.

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\*W. Brantley—*Three Capitals*.

## *Chapter Three*

For the King family, 1823 was a year to remember. The hard work, intelligent planning, and shrewd business sense had paid high dividends. Like the one in the Holy Book of which Edmund King was so familiar, he had used his talents to produce other talents and had reaped rich rewards. It was now time to build that new home for his beloved family; something he had been looking forward to since his arrival in Alabama.

Many slaves were expert craftsmen, skilled in carving and plaster work. Such was the case here. Clay was gathered along the banks of Shoal Creek, a kiln was erected, and the bricks were made in the finest fashion of that day. Glass windows were imported and installed, which was a *first* for this area. There was much talk concerning this lovely home and at its completion, people came from miles around to see the new "mansion." This was transposed to the "Mansion House" by the slaves who admired it with solemn wonder. Clyde Clifton, writing in the Birmingham Sunday Chronicle in 1886, states:

*"Although it has buffeted the storm of sixty-odd years, it remains solid for it belongs not to the era of Sham and Budensick. In its solid simplicity it is a reminder of the character of the Virginia gentleman who founded this homestead."*

This wasn't the only important event of 1823 for the Kings. Another son and namesake, Edmund Thomas, was born. Both mother and father had their hands full. This could have accounted for a record found in the Shelby County Courthouse. In the June Session of County Court, 1823, a fine of twenty dollars was levied against Edmund King for failure to serve as a juror. Quoting: *"King appeared and rendered his excuse. The court being of opinion that the excuse was not sufficient it is ordered that the former judgement be made absolute and that the clerk proceed to recover the fine of twenty dollars with cost."*

"Received of Edmund King the sum of twenty-five dollars awarded against E. King as a forfeiture."

(Signed) James Walker CCC.

\* \* \*

Congress, in the act of admitting Alabama to the union, made a large grant (72 sections, 46,080 acres) to the state, in trust for a university to be established. All the public lands about Montevallo were selected under this grant. In preparation for the charter of a state university, the trustees made recommendations for the location of the seminary of learning which read in part:

"If the General Assembly deem it expedient to locate the university in the northern part of the state, the Board should consider Athens, or some place near it most desirable. If located in the middle section of the state then some point within Township 17, Range 13 in Autauga County, *Wilson's Hill in Shelby County*, the place called Gages in Perry County or some place near the town of Tuscaloosa."

One of the first trustees of the state university was Dr. Shackelford who lived near Montevallo. He wrote the resolution that provided for the laying off of the town at Wilson's Hill and it was a report of the survey and the map describing it that the town was first called Montevallo. This was signed by Governor Pickens in 1823. According to F. W. Barnett, "The suggestiveness and appropriateness of this Italian name is very readily appreciated when we translate it: *"On a mound in a valley."*"\*

Rev. Alva Woods, D.D. (who later became the first president of the University of Alabama) selected Montevallo for the University, the particular site being the hill afterwards occupied by the residence of Burwell B. Lewis, but fortune showed its fickleness and the University was moved to Tuscaloosa before structural work was begun.

Other settlers reached the village of Montevallo. Q. Q. Walker built a mill on the banks of the winding stream and later Alexander Nelson built a flour mill to which people brought their wheat to be ground. The growing season had been good. Cotton was becoming king. Transportation was improving which resulted in more products to be shipped. Alabama River ferry rates at this time were as follows:

|                       |                    |
|-----------------------|--------------------|
| Four-wheeled carriage | \$1.00             |
| Horse and rider       | 12 $\frac{1}{2}$ c |
| Two-wheeled carriage  | 50c                |
| Single horse          | 6 $\frac{1}{4}$ c  |
| Pack horse            | 12 $\frac{1}{4}$ c |

\*F. Willis Barnett—*The Birmingham News.*

|                       |                   |
|-----------------------|-------------------|
| Foot passenger        | 6 $\frac{1}{4}$ c |
| Cattle, per head      | 5c                |
| Hogs, sheep and goats | 3c                |

Oftentimes merchandise was taken downstream and the seller returned home overland. On the steamboats passengers had a choice of enjoying the luxury of a stateroom or for much less cost could sleep on deck if they could find room to stretch out. There were disadvantages to this outdoor choice, of course, as there was no protection from the elements and one had to furnish his own food. Many of the steamboats carried a string band and had dances on board. Good silver, china, and crystal could be found in the dining areas of the better vessels.



## *Chapter Four*

As Edmund King's fortune grew he expanded his interests. With good help to run the plantation, he responded to the demands of a growing village and became a merchant as well as a planter. This demanded much of his time but he was never too busy to give of himself to his church. Politics, as such, to E. King was left to others, but he did show concern and interest in a candidate's potential influence on the country. Most people in Alabama found themselves caught up in the fervor of national politics when their hero of Horseshoe Bend, Andrew Jackson, was running against John Quincy Adams for president. The General had established his case, step by step, and Alabamians knew he would win. But when the final vote was counted, Adams had taken thirteen states — a majority of *one*. Their hero had lost.

They were still smarting over this when it was learned that the celebrated Marie Joseph Paul Roch Yves Gilbert du Motier, Marquis de Lafayette might just possibly accept an invitation to visit Alabama. Governor Pickens had indicated the remoteness of the situation but Senator William Rufus King sent word from Washington that the "nation's benefactor" would accept an invitation. The Assembly got together and tried to come up with its best resolution and welcome in inviting the distinguished visitor to the southland. As the members reached home by way of horseback, stagecoach and steamboat, the news of the Revolutionary War hero's visit spread throughout the state. Since the mail was slow, it took some time to plan and execute plans for the occasion.

It was agreed with the state of Georgia the spot to which the Marquis would be brought and delivered to the Alabama hosts. General Thomas W. Farrar, a lawyer living in Elyton, along with four other gentlemen, one of whom is believed to have been Edmund King's brother, Peyton, rose to the occasion. Farrar delivered the invitation and the Marquis accepted with pleasure.

General Thomas Woodward was charged with the duty of seeing the guest safely through Creek country. Being part Creek himself,

Woodward spoke the language and was well acquainted with the country. Two cavalry troops in dress uniform, several colonels and General Dale were present to greet the Marquis. General Woodward described it as the most imposing show he ever witnessed.\*

When the Georgia escort approached the east bank of the Chattahoochee River they were met by Chilly McIntosh, son of a Creek chief, and fifty Indian warriors stripped naked and finely painted who escorted the visitors from the ferry to the river bank where the delegation was waiting. After elaborate introductions, the group went to Fort Mitchell where he was again welcomed by Creek Indians. A ball game followed in which two hundred Indians participated. Then the long journey to Montgomery began.

The robust General was an imposing figure in his resplendent uniform. He was accompanied by his faithful man-servant, Bastien, and his dog, Quiz. His son-in-law, Lavasseur, came along too and acted as his secretary.

The forests of Alabama had been soaked by the early spring rains and the roads were terrible. The fresh, blue uniforms of the troops were soon covered with mud. Some of the thoroughbred horses mired up to their bellies in the quagmire. The cavalry checked roads and bridges and inspected hidden areas for lurking enemies.

After an over-night stop at Luca's Tavern at Waugh, the cavalcade arrived in Montgomery where they were greeted by the Governor and a cheering crowd of spectators. The Marquis responded warmly to the welcoming speeches and then retired to the lovely home of John Edmondson which had been fitted for the occasion. The General liked good food and fine wine and was accommodated by the entertainment committee.

The following night Lafayette was guest of honor at a grand ball at which those of recognized position and influence attended. It was a glamorous event and an imported band made it even more exciting. Alabama had no orchestra or band for such a gala occasion so it was decided to bring one from New Orleans. The band had to make the long trip across Lake Pontchartrain and then up the Alabama River to Montgomery. According to Blue in his *History of Montgomery*, there was only one sour note to the grand occasion — one member of the band, Joseph Toussaint, did not get back to New Orleans for the reason that he was murdered by one Reuben G. Bates.\*\*

Another incident marred the entertainment of the famous guest. After the ball he boarded a steamship for Cahawba, the capital, where others waited to pay him homage. It had been requested and granted that the signal guns of all steamboats be fired to announce the approach of the visitor to Selma and Cahawba. While crewmen were

\*T. S. Woodward, *Reminiscences*

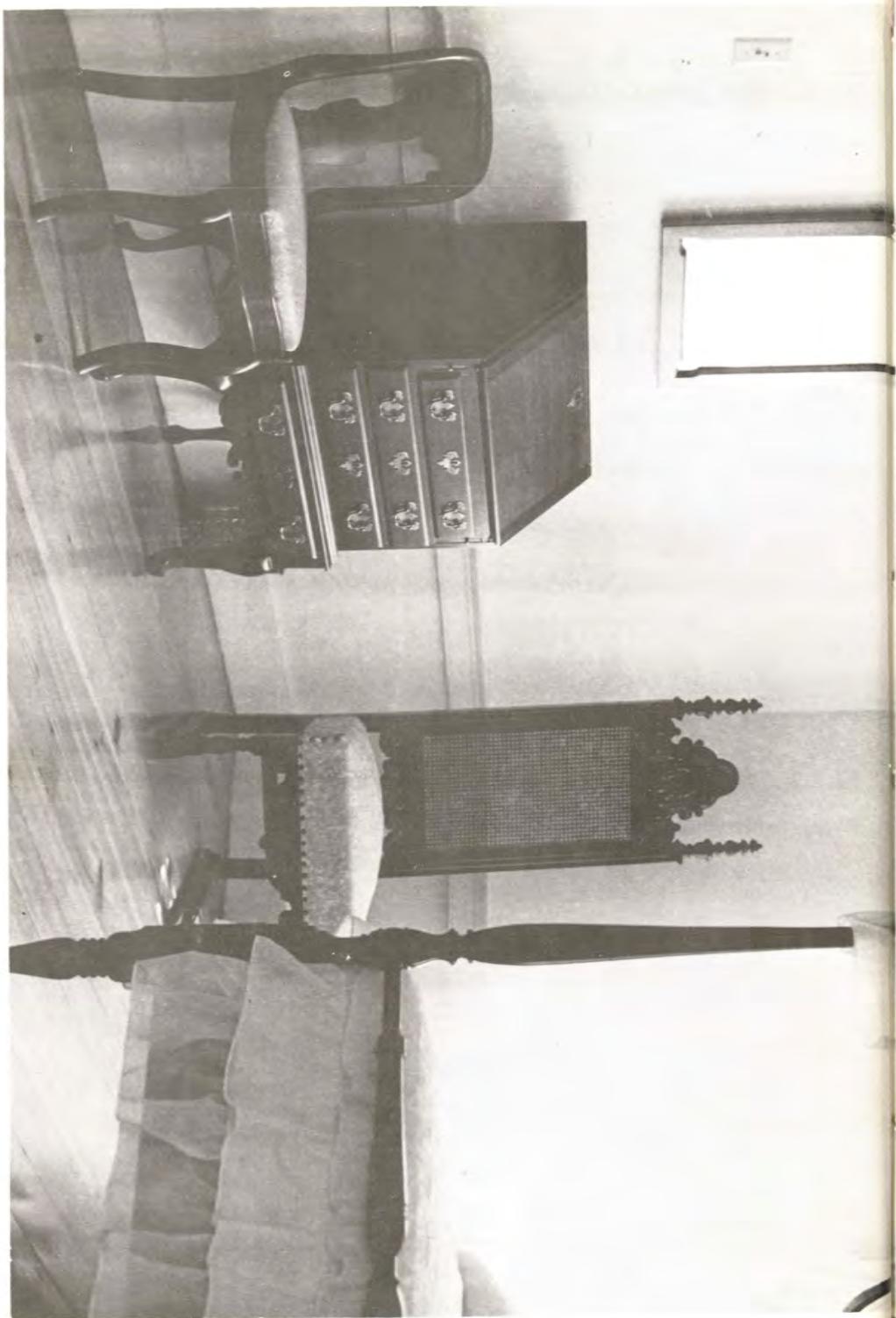
\*\*M. P. Blue, *History of Montgomery*.

carrying out these instructions, a man named Roberts was injured by the steamship *Elizabeth's* guns. General Lafayette sensed the human interest created by the unfortunate accident and visited with the wounded man. As he left, he cautioned General Woodward to take care of the man. But, according to Woodward, the man took care of himself by suing Mr. Rhodes, the owner of the *Elizabeth*, and received a verdict of \$1,500 which was affirmed by the Supreme Court of Alabama in the case of Rhodes vs. Roberts. This is believed to be the first case of personal injury negligence damage suit decided by the Supreme Court of Alabama.\*

After being lavishly entertained at Mobile, the famous guest was given a fond farewell and the populace made an effort to get back to normal (though it was thought by some that Alabama would never be the same again). As is true after any extravaganza, the "fiddler must be paid," and I'm sure more than a few people were a little shocked at the tab. In checking the accounts, Governor Pickens found the cost to be \$15,715.18 *plus* \$1,350 which was the pro rata share of transporting the General from Alabama to Louisiana.

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\*T. S. Woodward, *Reminiscences*.



Bedroom of King House

## *Chapter Five*

At the King household in Montevallo the family had too much to do at home to get overly excited about the gala. Things were happening here. Everything was growing — including the family. Son Peyton Griffin was born in 1826, and in 1828 it was Lyttleton who arrived to bless the home.

The little ones were cared for by nannies but always received love and attention from mother Nancy. Father Edmund, although busy with his varied business interests, never neglected the children's education, both academic and religious. William, the eldest son, had been tutored at home and now at the age of 14 his father felt that he was ready for college. Transylvania College in Lexington, Kentucky was the choice and the young man was made ready to go. He rode the entire distance alone, on horseback. His entire wardrobe was in his saddle bag and the money for his schooling was in a belt around his waist. He made the trip in five days. It took only a short time to prove that he had talent of a marked character and ranked as one of the best scholars. He graduated with first honors in the same class with Cassius Clay, John Breckenbridge, Joe Bullock, Tom Hunt and Alexander B. Meek.

William A. Elmore was in college at this time but did not graduate due to the illness and death of his father in Columbia, South Carolina. William King and Elmore became close friends and agreed to go to law school together in Virginia. Two years there completed their studies and they left the University to meet again in New Orleans to cast their fate and fortune together in the crescent city.

The summer after leaving the University of Virginia, William Woodson went to Washington, D. C. to visit relatives and had a grand time. William Rufus King, who represented Alabama in the United States Senate, and was later vice-president, showed this young cousin the sights of the capital city and introduced him to some men of distinction.\* Daniel Webster, John C. Calhoun and Robert Hayne

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\*Manning and Manning, *Our Kin.*

of South Carolina, Benton of Missouri, and Clay of Kentucky made a lasting impression on young William and interaction with such capable men had a marked influence on his character.

\* \* \*

Some historians say that the early 1830's could be called Alabama's luxury years. The state bank was expanded and branches were added in different parts of the state. The state capital had been moved to Tuscaloosa although other towns had pushed for its location (among them was Montevallo). John Gayle was elected governor. At long last Andrew Jackson reached the White House but all was not rosy. There were still Indians in Alabama who owned lands which resulted in a conflict between Gayle and Jackson because of differing points of view. To help resolve this problem, Jackson sent his personal representative, Francis Scott Key, author of our national anthem, to Tuscaloosa and he helped to work out a compromise which was satisfactory to all.

Social life in Alabama was expanding. Many planters owned fine horses and horse racing became gala events. Several mineral springs were developed into resort areas and some were quite elegant. Blount Springs was fashionable and attracted many people of note in Alabama. Shelby Springs was the one nearest the King family and many people of the area followed the urge to vacation both there and at Blount Springs.

Camp meetings became popular. Some were started before a church was built and continued at regular periods. They were usually held in late summer when crops were laid by. Religion was the purpose of these meetings but was by no means confined to this. It was also a social event where politics, crops, the weather, and other items of local interest were discussed. Singing took up a part of the meeting and quite frequently young people found in them an opportunity for courtship.

It was during the 30's that the last three King children were born. Nathaniel was born in 1831; Shelby in 1835; and Frank Ragan in 1839.

Railroad service was improving and in 1848 the Mobile and Ohio Railroad was chartered by the legislature and was one of the first in the United States to receive a land grant from the Federal government.

Although cotton was still king, other crops were being grown. Guano and other fertilizers were introduced to increase production of farm products. Livestock increased in both number and variety which helped the state pull out of its recent depression.

Although gold mining provided little wealth, between 1836 and 1849 Alabama produced \$350,000 worth of gold.

The mining and manufacture of iron was increasing and would prove to be of greater need in the future. One of the important furnaces was the Shelby Iron Works. Horace Ware started manufacturing pig iron and hollow ware and sold his products to farmers and merchants. In 1854 he added a forge and made wrought iron.\* As transportation improved he expanded his business and shipped his products along the Coosa River.

Edmund King's fortune increased and he used much of it to help others. At the same time he challenged others to do likewise. A letter from Mr. King to the *Alabama Baptist* reads as follows:

December 20, 1845

Dear Brethren,

In your paper of the 20th November, I find a pledge of ten individuals to pay \$100 each for Domestic Missions to be paid when ninety other persons are found who will give \$100. I fear that offers of this kind which appear to show great liberality are sometimes made under the apprehension that they will never have anything to pay, and if this be the calculation of any of those ten who have pledged to pay the \$100, I also fear that they will not be deceived — but I hope and trust they will. I will, however, make one of the ninety persons provided the money is all paid down after the amount is made up. After due notice thereof given in the *Alabama Baptist* or secured in some way that will answer the same purpose for domestic missions, as if paid down. Any way so you can be sure there is no failure.

I don't much expect to have the money to pay under the conditions proposed but it will be a good thing if I shall have it to pay, and the ten thousand dollars in one year will be such a noble sum for domestic missions. If these ten brethren who have pledged \$100.00 each made this pledge under the impression that the ninety pledges would not be obtained I want them to be disappointed and if they made the pledge under the impression that the amount stipulated would be raised, I hope they will not be disappointed. Perhaps it would be well if you would state in your paper more definitely the manner and time of payment.

Yours in Christian bonds,  
S/Edmund King

The editor made this reply:

"The letter of brother Edmund King speaks for itself. Will not other brethren forward their names making similar

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\*The forge was later purchased by Edmund King.

offers? Some fifteen or twenty individuals have already pledged themselves to give each the required sum. Let others do likewise. Brother Holman, the new corresponding secretary, is actively engaged in his duties, going from town to town and from house to house with success. But, let not brethren wait to be visited at their houses. Send in your pledges to the editors of this paper and we will see that they are placed in Brother Holman's hands. Our Northern brethren, gathered from ten or twelve states, at their Missionary Convention raised some \$15,000.00. It was a glorious act, we rejoice in it. But let the Baptist of Alabama show the world that the brethren of a single state can raise an equal sum for Domestic Missions."

Edmund King was a great believer in and promoter of Howard College which had its beginnings on a farm near Greensboro in 1833. It was originally a school for small boys and was later moved to Marion. It was destroyed by fire at one time but was rebuilt. In 1848 it became a college and degrees were conferred on its first graduates in that same year.

In May of 1849, this article appeared in the *Alabama Baptist*.

"Our good brother, Edmund King, writing us from Montevallo, in relation to an interesting meeting recently held in his vicinity bears the following testimony to the fruits of the Theological department of Howard College, in the ministry or our good brother A. Vanhoose.

'Bro. Chambliss: I thought while Bro. Vanhoose was preaching (and I think so yet) that if all the money which has been expended on the beneficiaries of Howard College had only produced one such preacher as he, we were richly compensated in him.

Let this be born in mind, and further, that Bro. V. is but one of quite a number tho' among the fruits of this flourishing institution. May God prosper him and those who are preparing to succeed him. Upon their fidelity and success depends, to some extent, the advancement of our cause."

In the same issue of this Baptist publication, Edmund King has a rather lengthy account of a Missionary meeting which he attended and it gives a little more insight into the Montevallo gentleman's strict code of morality:

Bro. Chambliss —

I lately attended a meeting at Union Church, Jefferson Co. the object of which was the establishment of a Domestic Mission for the counties of Walker, Blount, and Jefferson, portions of which are exceedingly destitute. Delegates were

in attendance from seven churches and contributions from nine though the late disastrous frost had spread such gloom over the agricultural interests of the country as to materially affect the amount of their donations. We, however, made provisions for two missionaries — fifty dollars each, and conferred the appointments upon Elder A. J. Waldrop and H. G. Smith.

The first two days of the meeting the congregation was small, but on the Sabbath it was large and attentive. The pulpit on this day was occupied by brethren Boling of the Methodist Church and Vanhoose, late of Howard College.

On Monday, a large circus was advertised to be exhibited at Jonesboro, in the vicinity of our meeting, and a special invitation was extended to Elder Boling to attend with his family without charge. His public reply on the occasion was worthy to be noticed and without pretending to give his language I will simply state the substance of what he said. He observed "the cunning, catch-penny Yankee thought that should he and his family attend such a place it might serve to dissipate the moral restraints of the community and everybody would be emboldened to go to the circus. But no, he would not lend the weight of his influence in leading the populace into any such snare of the Devil."

After Brother Boling had concluded these and many like remarks in disapprobation of members of the church attending such places, Brother Vanhoose arose and stated his concurrence to all that had been said, adding that he wished the churches would deal strictly with every member who should be found at such exhibitions. To this Bro. Boling answered, "Amen" in such a voice sufficiently distinct to be heard by every person in the house.

From hence, you can see what the judgment of Christians in these parts in relation to circus-going members of the church.

The above services were succeeded by a very able discourse from Bro. Vanhoose at the close of which the doors of the church were opened for the reception of members when three persons came forward and related a work of grace upon their hearts, and were received for baptism. It was a time of rejoicing among the people of the Most High. Yes, I assure you, the congregation of the Saints feasted largely upon the love of God shed abroad in their hearts.

Yours in the love of Christ  
S/Edmund King

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The King family make-up had changed considerably by 1840. The census of this year showed only the four younger children at home but there were two other males listed. One was designated as a school teacher, with no identification of the other. Perhaps it was one of the many boys who was befriended by Edmund King. It could have been French Nabors who later bought and returned to live at the old mansion house.

The two oldest girls, Elizabeth and Louisa, were married. Lu-cinda died while still quite young.

A notice in the *Huntsville Advocate* February 11, 1832 reads:

*Married at Montevallo, Shelby County by the Rev. Joab Lawler. William Acklen, Jr. Esq. of Huntsville to Miss Louisa A. King of the former place.*

In the *Selma Free Press* August 22, 1835 Marriages:

*George D. Shortridge of Montgomery to Miss Elizabeth, daughter of Edmund King, Esq. of Montevallo, Shelby County, in the evening of the 12th inst. by the Rev. Joab Lawler.*

Peyton Griffin, who had received the rudiments of education in the old field school near the mansion house was sent to Providence, Rhode Island at age 13 where he was to stay for two years to further his education under the tuition of Dr. Alva Woods, first president of the University of Alabama. During these two years, Peyton's vacations were spent in traveling where he visited many places of interest, witnessed many exciting scenes in the Dorr rebellion and the "hard-cider" campaign. He often heard Miller preach the coming of the Messiah and the early abolitionists denounce the sins of slavery. He visited with his cousin, William Rufus King, before returning home and was shown the same courtesy that his brother had received.

In 1842, Peyton entered the University of Alabama and maintained for three years the highest standing in his class. He became dissatisfied, however, and left school before he graduated. He had intentions of going to the University of Virginia but the Mexican War was flagrant and he helped his Tuscaloosa friend, Captain John C. Barr, raise a company of volunteers and joined the forces. He received a Lieutenancy and was stationed at Orezava, Cordova, and Vera Cruz. After seven months, peace was declared and Peyton returned to the homestead in Montevallo. Here he studied law for a year and when he became 21, he received his portion from his father and with it he emigrated to a new and unsettled part of Louisiana where he spent two years in opening a plantation and building a home.

Edmund Thomas King was educated at the University of Alabama, after which he too went to Louisiana and became partners with brother William in starting a sugar plantation. This was in the Parish of St. Martin on Bayou Lembarras and with Thomas' ambition, coupled with William's contribution of land and money, this plantation became one of the finest in the state.

No mother could ask more for her children. Nancy King had spent many long hours in hard work to meet their needs. They had been given the best education possible and had successfully taken advantage of it. She beamed with pride at their accomplishments and heaped as much love on her five grandchildren as she did her own. What a tragedy that she became ill and died at age 49, on September 10, 1842, with yet so much for which to live. Perhaps her loss was greatest to two-year old son, Frank Ragan, but seven-year-old Shelby would miss her too. In fact, her loss was felt severely by all her survivors.

The writer could find no record of the cause of death but bearing ten children in pioneer days without benefit of medical aid as we know it today could have been a contributing factor.



Grandfather clock which has been housed by the University of Montevallo for many many years.

## *Chapter Six*

With young children to care for, a thriving business, a large plantation and much church work to be done, it is not surprising that Edmund King would marry again, and soon. In 1848 he married Susan D. Ward, daughter of Sylvia and Joshua Ward. Susan was about the age of Edmund's daughter (32) and seemed qualified to become an instant mother. (No children were born of this marriage.) She gave of herself freely to complete the job of rearing a large and talented family. She must have suffered long with the rest of the family at young Lyttleton's death. There are no details available — only the headstone carving which reveals the sad story:

*Sacred to the memory of Lyttleton King who was accidentally killed by his brother in shooting at a deer. September 1848 in the 21st year of his age. (According to a diary in the possession of Roy Cunningham, he was killed by brother Nathaniel.)*

All was not sad, however. Susan could view with pride the accomplishments of the other children and grandchildren.

In New Orleans, Mr. Elmore had joined William Woodson in a partnership which lasted from 1835 to 1881 and was dissolved only by death.\*

They secured an office in Exchange Alley, then just opened as a public street; furnished it with plain furniture; commenced their library with the purchase of three hundred dollars worth of law books and entered the legal arena in competition with its leading members. Among these distinguished gentlemen were John R. Grimes, George Eustis, Jedah P. Benjamin, John and Thomas Slidell, Thomas A. Clark and others whose learning, eloquence, and social standing made the New Orleans Bar second to none in the United States.

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\*Department of History and Archives. Montgomery, Alabama. Courtesy Fred King, son of William

William King was of counsel in many very important cases, one of which is known as the Batture Case. This involved conflicting claims of the state, city, and riparian proprietors, to accretions of land formed by the deposit of sand and mud by the Mississippi River, along with the seventeen miles of the city's river front. He was sent by the city to the state senate in 1854 to secure legislation establishing conflicting rights in the future claimants of the Batture. The statute that he drew up and had passed proved so satisfactory to all that it has remained on the statute books without change from that time.

There were many other important cases, too numerous to be listed here, in which he participated and achieved success and fame as a lawyer. The only public office he ever held was that of state Senator and Reporter of the Decisions of the Supreme Court. Several times he was offered office, especially on the Supreme Court (of Louisiana) but he persistently refused. He was strictly a lawyer and no judgeship or other office tempted him from his legitimate practice of his beloved profession. His ambition lay only in the line of his profession and the standing he obtained at the bar was indeed a proud one. As a result of this lucrative practice he made a large fortune and retired from practice in 1859. But alas, this was not to be! One cannot necessarily reckon with result of war.

Again sadness filled the mansion house. After slightly less than two years of marriage to Edmund King, Susan died.

With the help of faithful and devoted servants and daughter Elizabeth, who lived nearby at Holly Brook Farm, Edmund continued to give guidance to a decreasing family and provide hospitality to a constant flow of visitors. His home was the stopping place of many men of note as well as for young men who came his way searching for security and stability. He took a great interest in his grandchildren, particularly the children of Elizabeth who were with him often. The 1850 census lists the following in the Shortridge household:

|                            |    |                         |
|----------------------------|----|-------------------------|
| George D. Shortridge       | 35 | b. Ky. lawyer — \$5,000 |
| Elizabeth Shortridge       | 31 | b. Ala.                 |
| Leah Shortridge            | 51 | b. Ky. (his mother)     |
| Howard Shortridge          | 16 | (his brother)           |
| George D., Jr., Shortridge | 11 |                         |
| Louisa Shortridge          | 9  |                         |
| Eli Shortridge             | 7  |                         |
| Frank Shortridge           | 5  |                         |
| Lelia Shortridge           | 1  |                         |
| George Shortridge Lewis    | 12 |                         |
| Burrell B. Lewis           | 10 |                         |
| Paul Hamilton Lewis        | 7  |                         |

The three Lewis boys were children of George Shortridge's sister who were left homeless at the death of both parents. The Shortridges

took the boys and reared them as their own and it was said the boys responded favorably to Elizabeth Shortridge's "mothering."

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Life in general had been good to Alabamians. Crops were abundant. Though some people were more affluent than others, very few, if any were paupers.

Slavery was a way of life. Many slaves were contented, if not happy. Some became as close to the master as other members of the household.

As money became more available more people indulged in recreational activities. Horse racing grew as tracks and periodic meets were set up. In North Alabama, Andrew Jackson occasionally entered his horse. One enthusiast, Mr. Thomas Kirkman, went through the ordeal of getting his horse, Peytona, to Long Island to enter the annual North vs. South race. Amid much excitement and ado, Peytona won the race and with it a sizable purse. This was all very thrilling but getting the horse home was no little task. In speaking of it afterwards he expressed these thoughts, "It was harder to get my 'hoss' to New York and back than it was to win the race."\*

Needless to say there was some gambling on horse racing — but not openly. Cock fighting also provided opportunity for those who felt the urge to wager a bit. Too, there was a popular card game called faro and it was not uncommon for a professional who was passing through to clean the home town boy — even if it became necessary to be over-generous with the booze.

Though there were vices, most of the gentry confined their extracurricular activities to more acceptable practices. There were parties with music and dancing, traveling minstrel shows, which often played to standing-room-only crowds, and State Fairs, of which the first was held in Montgomery. The elegant spas and health resorts offered entertainment as well as mineral water. Bladen Springs in Choctaw County was referred to as the Sarasota of the South.\*\* Duffee House at Blount Springs was owned and operated by a jolly Irishman (father of Marie Gordon Duffee) who made his business and abode well known throughout the state. In the *Jones Valley Times* of the 1850's he advertised as "the best watering place in the Southern Country." Special passenger hacks left Elyton three times each week for Blount Springs and the fare was \$4.00. Board was \$1.00 per day. Point Clear, on Mobile Bay, was a favorite resort and the Grand Hotel operated its own boat between the Point and Mobile. Mobile also had a theatre and music lovers from all over made every effort to attend "during the season."

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\*William Brantley, *Chief Judge Stone*.

\*\*Department of History and Archives. Montgomery, Alabama.

All should have been right with the world but it wasn't. The storm clouds of war were heard rumbling, even at this date. If Edmund King were aware of the problems he didn't dwell on them. He much preferred concentrating on the church and its endeavors. In the *South Western Baptist* this article appeared.

Montevallo, 1854

Bro. Henderson:

On the 5th day of August last a man came into this neighborhood and passed himself off as a Baptist preacher. Spent the Sabbath with one of the members of Shoal Creek Church and left Sunday night after supper, pretending he was on his way to Florida. While he stayed at Brother Lucas' he swapped off a mule for a horse. His conduct while at Brother Lucas' excited some suspicion but not sufficient to justify advertising as an imposter. But three weeks after he left Brother Lucas', two men from Mississippi arrived in pursuit of him, they had in their possession a printed handbill from which it appears he had broke jail in Oaktibbeha County where he had been put for safe keeping to await his trial for horse stealing and murder. After he broke jail he stole a mare from David Montgomery, which mare he swapped for a mule and swapped the mule to Brother Lucas for a horse. The two did not follow him any farther than this neighborhood. This imposter assumed the name here of Thompson but was taken up in Mississippi by the name of William Brown; on the way here he passed by other names.

The said imposter is about 5 feet 8 or 10 inches high, about 35 years of age, hair rather dark, and a little bald on top of his head; fair skin, slender made, a small piece off the finger of the left hand, weighs about 135 lbs. \$120.00 reward is offered for him delivered to the sheriff of Oaktibbeha County or \$40.00 for his delivery to any jail and notice of the same.

All editors friendly to the cause of religion please copy.

Done by the order of the Shoal Creek Baptist Church.

Edmund King  
Noah Haggard  
John Lucas

This next article might have been in answer to a complaint from the old gentleman to the *South Western Baptist* concerning the publication of his thoughts and convictions.

"Bro. Edmund King will find communication of his in the 14th no. of our paper, May 25. If he has sent us any other, until that received this morn and which will be found in

another piece of today's paper, it has never come to hand. We hope, therefore, our good brother will no longer hesitate to write for our columns for fear that his articles will be unacceptable. We entertain too high an opinion of his piety, intelligence, and practical good sense, and of his clear and distinct manner in which his articles are written, to throw them under the table."

Keep writing he did — as long as his health and energy permitted. His interest in his church and church school, Howard College, did not wane and this was verified from articles published in the *South Western Baptist* over a period of time:

Montevallo. December 22, 1856

Messrs. Editors:

The Directors of the Alabama and Tennessee River Railroad have lately passed a resolution granting ministers of the gospel the privilege of passing over said road at half the rate of passage. This applies to ministers residing within the state.

Respectfully & C.

S/Edm'd King

Brother Edmund King of Montevallo says to provoke others to good works he will give \$10.00 for the relief of Brother Hunter and Trenton Church, providing the sum of \$250.00 is made up. Who will respond in either cash or a similar pledge?

Mobile.

Messrs. Editors:

Please acknowledge through your paper in the following amounts recently contributed to the benefit of the Mission Baptist Church:

Montevallo — Bro. Edmund King \$50.00  
Bro. H. R. Lyman 10.00

(on editorial column)

"Howard College Library — Dr. Talbird in a card in another column announces the gratifying intelligence that the proposition of Edmund King, of Montevallo, has just been met in regard to raising a fund for the purchase of a library for Howard College. The Southern Publication Society and Howard College are greatly indebted to the venerable and Godly man, brother King. The Lord send the church of Christ many such men! We hope Howard will continue to receive contributions for endowment and for Library."

Montevallo.

"A new and beautiful house of worship for the Baptist was opened first for use in that place on June 5, 1859. Bro. B. Manley preached morning and evening and the interest of the occasion was enhanced by the presence and aid of the pastor, W. Wilkes, and also of brother Thomas Maroney and Noah Haggard.

The church that is to use this new house has been accommodated since its constitution of 1856 by the kindness of the Cumberland Presbyterians with the use of their house of worship; a circumstance which was acknowledged in a pleasing manner by the pastor on the day of dedication. The Montevallo church took its origin from the old church of Shoal Creek, constituted in 1819. The members composing it being located in two divisions. It was thought more convenient and suitable after the constitution in Montevallo that the old church should be dissolved; that part of the members residing near Montevallo to join that church, and the other part to form a new constitution. Shoal Creek was accordingly dissolved December 19, 1857 and in the course of the next following year a new constitution was formed at a place known as Dogwood Grove, about four miles distance from Montevallo. This body, with Bro. Rogers for their pastor, have been greatly blessed and increased — and seem to enjoy the presence of the Lord. It is devoutly hoped that their elder sister, now comfortably established in Montevallo will receive the kind notice and approbation of the Master. Their house is eligible located near a beautiful grove — is built of bricks; handsomely pewed, plastered and painted, with a steeple and bell. Quite near it is a stately edifice, used by the Cumberland Presbyterians for a female high school. The entire cost of the Baptist is about four thousand dollars. Bro. H. R. Lyman is one of the active members of this church. The members have received valuable and efficient aid in the erection of their house from brethren of other denominations and from friends and adherents not yet brought into any church—among whom it is fit to mention Mr. Edward Davis, a prosperous merchant."

## *Chapter Seven*

Age was taking its toll on the elderly Mr. King. His children were concerned about him and so it was decided that daughter Elizabeth (Shortridge) and her family would move to the mansion to help care for father and grandfather.

Varied interests of the family continued. Son Nathaniel dipped his feet in the stream of politics and perhaps if his health had permitted he might have given more of himself to it. Like his brothers, he was liberally educated; travelled in Europe, graduated with honors from the University of Alabama, attended law school in Columbia, S. C., married Salome Elizabeth Sibley of Mobile and bought a plantation in Garland, Miss. His health was not good and he went to Cuba hoping the climate would prove to be a cure. When it did not, he returned to Montevallo. In 1855 he entered politics and became a candidate for the legislature from Shelby County. His keen mind and likeable manner aided in his win and he was elected to the House where he served only one term. His health became worse and from a biographical sketch, "he had a disease which continued to progress until it carried him off a few days later." He was only 32 years old and he left four small children. The youngest, Nathalie, age 6 months, was born in King House.

Peyton, who had not yet married, was living on his plantation in Louisiana and having few neighbors, he became bored and life was somewhat irksome. Thus he decided to enter politics. He was unanimously elected a member of a convention for Louisiana. He was subsequently elected a member of the Legislature that organized the State Government under the new constitution and at the expiration of his term, he was appointed by President Pierce, to be Receiver of Public Money at Monroe, Louisiana — an office which was much sought after and very profitable. During the three years he held this office, the receipts were very large and Mr. King encountered much difficulty and danger in making his monthly deposits in the branch mint at New Orleans. These dangers included yellow fever, low water,

and highway robbery. But his zeal and energy overcame the difficulties. After holding the office for three years he voluntarily resigned in favor of a particular friend who found the office in good condition.

In 1857, Peyton sold his plantation and slaves in Louisiana and after idling away a year or two in traveling and visiting friends and relatives, he returned to the old homestead in Alabama and resumed the study of law. He had planned to return to Louisiana and enter partnership with a distinguished member of the bar but the agitation that preceded the Confederate War forced him into politics in opposition to the extreme views of the fire-eaters and he participated in several conventions that immediately preceded the Presidential campaign of 1860.

He was a delegate to the famous Charleston Convention, and was a reluctant participant in the withdrawal of the Alabama delegation that he believed led to the disruption of the party and the election of Lincoln.\*

Edmund's son-in-law, George D. Shortridge, had been in politics for some time and seemed to thrive on it. In fact, he had grown up with such. Eli Shortridge, George's father, was judge of the Ninth Circuit. He was re-elected in 1843 but died less than six months after his election. George Stone was appointed to finish out the term. When Stone had to run for re-election, George Shortridge was one of his opposing candidates. It was a close election but Stone won. By this time, George Shortridge had become something of a pro in politics. In Tuscaloosa, he had previously held a clerkship in the office of Supreme Court and he was a clerk under the Honorable J. I. Thornton of Greene who was Secretary of State. In 1834 he was elected solicitor in Montgomery, where the family was then living. He was twice elected mayor of the young city and in 1838 he represented Montgomery in the legislature. His health became bad and he moved back to his plantation in Montevallo. When his health improved he made an "almost" successful bid for the judgeship. In 1848 he was elected by the legislature to the bench of the circuit court and in 1850 he continued on the bench by a large popular vote. In 1855 he resigned to run for the governorship but was defeated by John Winston who was running for re-election. It is evident then that George spent much time on the road and was to be involved even more in politics when he attended the Secession Convention.

A letter from Edmund's daughter, Louisa, to her young brother, Frank, was obtained from a relative and is printed here. It is noted that her son William was the same age as brother Frank. Louisa was visiting in her brother Shelby's home.

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\**The New South-Time. "Colonel Peyton G. King."* — 1888.

Montevallo. Feb. 23, 1858

Dear Brother,

I will write you a few lines this morning and enclose it with Pa's letter to you. I have derived much pleasure from reading your letter to Pa and sister Mollie since I have been here but they have not fully compensated me for the loss of your society. As I have done my part towards preserving friendly intercourse and relationships, I hope you will follow my example and pay me a visit next summer and write to me often.

Can't you get William's oldest son to accompany you to Huntsville? I want to see his boys so much. I expect to leave here next Friday for home, by way of New Orleans. I declined the Cuba trip on account of the yellow fever. Nat started on the 12th and expects to be gone two months. He thinks it doubtful about his visiting Huntsville next summer.

I got a letter from William last Saturday. His family were well. He invited me to stop a while with them. Peyton had gone to Vernon — would return the first of April. Joe Acklen and his family were in the city.

I have had a pleasant visit here at Shelby's. I love sister Mollie very much.

Sister Elizabeth and Lou came up last Thursday was a week. I have been to see them once — will go again before I leave. Shortridge never shows himself. I have been there twice. I don't know much about him. I shall try to see him the next time I go there.

Terrill Holland is boarding here and going to school — he is a very genteel looking boy.

Willie is doing finely at school. He is one of Dr. Grith's brag scholars. He wants to see you more than anybody living. You must write to him. I hope you will study hard nad get compensated for your labour and expense. Write soon. Good-by.

Your affectionate sister

S/ Louisa Acklen

Frank Ragan, Edmund's youngest son was in school at the University of Virginia at this time and another letter to him, from a friend, gives news from Alabama.

University of Alabama, Mar. 25 — 1859

Dear Frank,

Although I am in no communicative mood, still I have seated myself to answer your very welcome letter. The gar-

rulous part of my nature so little predominates tonight that I could compress in a nutshell all that I had to say on the most voluminous subject. Knowing then the state of my feelings you will be responsible if you read what is subjoined below.

If you could take a glance into some of the rooms you would be I know surprised at the little study which is done this year in comparison with the last. The boys are not wild but it comes perfectly natural to lead a good easy good-for-nothing kind of life, which altho' not so profitable still causes the moments to fly away quite rapidly and to some, pleasantly. But though willing to confess my natural inertness still I like to be employed to feel at the close of the day that my time has been well spent and that I have labored usefully and diligently. Any number of parties have been given in this place during the last month. A student's life being so isolated these are always sunbeams in his college days. The town appears to have just waked up and has been full of parties of all kinds. Having no use for the people in Tuscaloosa and not associating or affiliating with them, these parties are the only or nearly the only means which we have of breaking through the every day sameness of every institution of learning. If we were circumstanced like yourself near Washington and were allowed as you are to take a pleasure trip whenever you desired it then I would like the University of Alabama finely altho' I am willing to own that with two or three exceptions none of our profs are walking Encyclopedias.

I would have liked greatly to have been with you at the Capitol and to have had the pleasure of old Back's acquaintance together with the hospitable niece, Miss Lane. How did you like the city? I expect that Washington city is as corrupt as any place in the U. S. Here lately the various papers published there contain a description of the ladies dresses and even as far do they go that you can know by referring to them whether Senator Somebody's wife had on a garter — blue, red, white, or striped. This is proof of the bad taste and that late affair of SICKLES is a sad proof of the city's morals.

All the Erosophics are interested in the fitting up of the new Hall. Six book cases, similar to the one placed near the door in the old Hall, will be placed on one side and the pictures will occupy the other side, a new carpet has been purchased, the old chairs and desks will be disposed of and new ones procured. A new president's stand is nearly finished and whenever these improvements are made I believe the Erosophic Hall will equal any in the state. I hated to move from our old room; it seemed like separating from a good and tried friend. I think, Frank, that the recollections con-

nected with a Literary Society are more strong than those generally awakened by other things in your college course even when a silent spectator of the proceedings, provided you avail yourself of the library. From this source alone if spare moments were devoted to the best authors I doubt not that the reading would be equally as advantageous as the close application to text books.

Dr. G. has been absent on business for a week and Benagh has been necessarily detained at home on account of his wife's sickness. So we will have, when they demand back their recitations next week, Garland-Benagh, Benagh-Garland until the close of the term. Their recitations being the most difficult, you can see that we will have a superabundance of work. For the first time this year Benagh took our class to the Observatory night before last. We re-examined Jupiter and Saturn. The former, you know, is the largest of the planets.

We have gotten to be extremely fashionable. We lunch at twelve and dine at five. I don't know I will like the plan after it has been in operation long enough to judge correctly but I feel now as the old woman did when informed that a new way had been invented for making children —? that "the old way suits me finely."

I have just read *Fifteen Years with the Mormons*. The work is the experience of a lady and if all the crimes which she alleges against her apostolized religion bear with them the semblance of truth, then Utah must have "more devils than a vast hell can hold."

I read this week, *School Days at Rugby*. Tom Brown, the hero of the tale is an extraordinary character — many such characters have we seen. And herein the merit of the work lies, that it is not the history of Tom Brown but the history of human nature. The work was evidently written in vindication of Dr. Arnold who was pres. of Rugby.

Received a letter from Ed this evening. He is at Wade Keyes' Law School and will get his license in June. Mat Sanders was admitted to the bar this week and will no doubt win for himself a goodly reputation.

Frank, it is nearly twelve and I have been up late the greater part of this week. Nothing of interest is transpiring except that the chess players in college are carrying on a game with the town young men. The latter will lose in a few more moves. Anderson Crenshaw, brother to Willis, is the main prop of the college club and he is in fact a superior player.

Paul and Sam desire their love to be given to you.  
Heard from Thad by way of letter from home which stated  
that Boykin and himself returned together.

Your true friend,

S/ R. C. Jones

## *Chapter Eight*

By 1860, Alabama's population had grown to 964,201. Abraham Lincoln had been elected president, which to many Alabamians was the last blow against states rights. The peaceful atmosphere at the little town of Montevallo and surrounding communities was not to last much longer. Secession was uppermost in the minds and speech of many politicians but it did not monopolize Edmund King's thoughts. He preferred reading of his friends' experiences such as this in the *South Western Baptist*.

Bro. Dawson—

I addressed you last from Talladega town. On Monday 19th I preached to the Baptist Church in that place. It would be vain for me to express my attachment to a people among whom I lived on the kindest terms for twenty years. All I can say is, from my heart I love them.

Among my hearers on the occasion was C. P. Samuel and many of his scholars. Mr. Samuel is a well known teacher and has a large flourishing Female School in Talladega.

After preaching, Deacon James Headen conveyed me to his hospitable premises, where I tarried for the night — and next morning the same generous Deacon carried me to Talladega Church on Talladega Creek. Rev. Q. Welch is the venerable and much esteemed pastor of this most excellent church. Here, there was the most precious meeting I had on my trip. I may number these brethren as the best friends I have on this earth. Preaching over, we set out for the Rev. Welch's and took dinner at Bro. W. A. Welch's where a good brother was worsted by coming in contact with a fat turkey.

After spending a pleasant night with elder Welch and his good wife, my good friend carred me to Kymulga Church — Rev. Gordon Mynott, pastor. The day was bad and the

creek so high that we could not cross. A canoe was found and elder Welch turned captain Welch and steered the company safely over. We found a few persons to whom I preached. The same good steersman landed us over the creek and we set out for Tallasseechatchie Church. At night we staid at Col. Wm. Mallory's, the Virginia gentleman and good farmer. How it rained that night!

Next morning (still in elder Welch's conveyance) we set out for Tallaseechatchie Church (more pretty Indian names) where we met a goodly congregation of old friends, to whom I preached, and we had a good time. Here I reluctantly left my dear brother Welch.

At this point I was met by Rev. J. J. Bullington, pastor, to kindly convey me to my next appointment. The workman, being worthy of his hire, we dined at deacon Thos. L. Pope's and tarried for the night with deacon Baldwin Fluker and wife, who keep a preachers' hotel, free, near Syllacogga where they can get every attention to both soul and body.

After refreshments at the house of mine host we set compass for Mount Zion Church. Here I met the best churches, where I served for years as pastor. They are building a new meeting house at Syllacogga, three miles from the old site. Then on to Columbiana, the seat of justice for Shelby County.

Railroads can work miracles, almost. Columbiana never took a growth until the whistle was heard in the distance. For years wags called it "Coontown" but Coontown is out of the question now and it bears, without a blush, the euphonious name of Columbiana. But a few years ago, and there was not a meeting house in the place, everybody that wished to preach, preached in an old "academy." Now there are two good and comfortable houses of worship, Methodist and Baptist. The town, everyway, has greatly improved. I preached to an attentive audience in the Baptist Church on Monday night. Rev. Wm. Carroll, now of Autaugaville, was their former pastor, under whose labors mainly the church came into existence. Since his removal, Elder J. A. Collins is their pastor. Bro. Collins commenced his labors with them this year with good indications. He is much beloved by his people. I was gratified to find him with his flock.

I spent a pleasant night at Dr. Moseley's with brother Jesse. Travellers, on landing at the depot, if they wish to visit Columbiana, will find B. F. Parnell quite a gentleman, ready to convey them in a good hack, drawn by good horses. I have warm friends here and some relations. One of the most agreeable nights I spent on my tour was with the liberal-minded man, John McClannahan, Esq.

Leaving Columbiana, I landed at this place today (Montevallo) and put up with the venerable, useful, and liberal Edmund King. Montevallo has also been waked up by a whistle and has grown up to quite a respectable size, and is quite prosperous. Recently there was a Baptist Church organized in the place and a good brick meeting house built. It is the neatest village church in Alabama, belonging to the Baptist. Elder A. G. McCrew, of Selma, is their good pastor. My appointment at this place was for the evening, but the rain prevented the people coming out. Here Rev. N. Haggard and his wife met me, and we tarried together at Bro. King's. This aged couple (Haggards) are yet stout and healthy. The religion of Jesus is their theme. One learns much in conversing with such ripe Christians. Bro. Haggard is yet actively engaged in the ministry. Rev. Richard Wood is a member of this church and is still actively engaged in preaching the gospel. Tomorrow I leave for home via Selma and Montgomery.

(signed) H. E. T.

The initials are probably those of H. E. Taliaferro. According to the Sesquicentennial Issue of *The Alabama Baptist*, he was a colorful character — a tanner and farmer by profession, who later became an impassioned preacher and a diligent student of the Bible. He served for a few years as the Senior Editor of the *South Western Baptist*.

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William L. Yancy, a great orator who favored secession, voiced his feelings quite emphatically to all those who would listen and perhaps this helped to tilt the scales. On January 11, 1861, Alabama voted to secede from the Union. As the news spread, crowds cheered and banners were raised.

Areas of North Alabama, particularly Athens and Huntsville, were slow in reaching the decision because they believed the question should have been put to the people for a vote. The *Montgomery Advertiser* put out an EXTRA edition which devoted much of its space to the big news of secession.

In February, all southern states were invited to send delegates to Montgomery to organize the Confederate States of America. The Secession Convention drew up a new constitution called the Constitution of 1861. George Shortridge of Kingswood represented Shelby County in this convention. On the fifth day of the convention Jefferson Davis of Mississippi was elected president and Alexander H. Stephens as vice-president. Both men had hesitated to go so far as to leave the Union because they felt the North would use force to

prevent it. Time would quickly prove this to be true. Right now, however, participants were caught up in feverish excitement which often overshadows reality. As Yancy introduced Jeff Davis to the cheering crowd with these words, "the man and the hour have met," no one doubted his belief.

At the convention, a huge flag was unfurled in the center of the Hall. It was so large it took several gentlemen, standing on tables, to clearly display it. The ladies had requested Mr. Yancy to present it in a grand manner worthy of their labor and handiwork, and they were pleased. A resolution was passed to accept the flag with appreciation. In a formal acceptance, Mr. Wm. Smith spoke these words: "We accept this flag, and though it glows with but a single star, may the star increase in magnitude and brilliancy until it out rivals the historic glories of the Star Spangled Banner."

On Monday, February 18, 1861 the Confederate States inaugurated its first — and last — president. In a carriage drawn by four white horses, the president-elect Davis, Vice president-elect Stephens, a minister, and an army officer rode up Dexter Avenue in Montgomery while crowds gathered and followed the procession to the capitol. The band played a new tune, "I wish I was in Dixie's Land" (later known as Dixie) which was snappy and soul stirring. At one o'clock, Howell Cobb administered the simple oath of office to Jefferson Davis on the portico of the capitol. This was world wide news. Many reporters and artists from all over the world covered the event.\*

Britain was especially interested because it was not beyond reasonable conjecture that the seceding states might become a part of the empire.

In a little less than two months, the conflict began. At 4:30 on the morning of April 12, 1861 the Confederate batteries began firing on Fort Sumpter and the war was on. In a short time a bloody, and devastating conflict was spreading all over the land.

On April 22, the *Clark County Democrat* had the headlines, WAR! WAR! TO ARMS! followed by this plea:

"Fighting has commenced at several points and Northern troops are moving southward by the thousands! Let us prepare to meet the enemy at once! We must make sacrifices or be overwhelmed by our enemies! A large number of volunteers are called for from Alabama and if not raised speedily a draft may be expected. Let it not be said that men have to be drafted in Clark County. Come forward, fellow citizens, and respond to your country's call!"

Many young men did volunteer and because of the rush to join, many had to go in home-made uniforms and carry swords made from

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\*Department of Archives and History. Montgomery, Ala.  
*Alabama Historical Quarterly*, 1941.

wagon wheel rims. They did respond, however — 125,000, from all over Alabama. It took only a short while for the people to realize what the South didn't produce, the South would not have, and this would provide hardships for the people as well as the army. Although the supply of coal and iron was unlimited in Alabama, it was not until the war that iron was made in any quantity. Furnace after furnace was set up and Alabama became an important producer for the Confederacy. The largest furnaces were at Oxmoor, the Cahawba Iron Works in Irondale, Tannehill, Shelby Iron Works, and Bibb Naval Furnace at Brierfield. After the war started, the arsenal was moved to Selma where hundreds of workers manufactured cannons, small arms and munitions. Some of the Confederate ships were constructed at Selma so it was an important center to be protected from the enemy.

The Civil War, as such, will be left to historians but activities related to or affecting the King family will be mentioned.

New Orleans was captured in 1862 leaving Mobile as the seaport for receiving supplies. But this didn't last long. Recognizing its importance to the Confederacy the Union Army closely blockaded the port. There are many colorful accounts of speedy blockade runners risking capture or death to enter the bay with much needed supplies. It must be said that all the seamen who took such chances were not necessarily motivated by love for their country — some did it only for the money involved. Others, like the King men felt honor bound to do their part.

After the battles of Shiloh and Corinth and defeat of the Confederates, the enemy moved into North Alabama. In April of 1862, General Mitchell occupied Huntsville and General I. V. Turchinov captured Athens. The latter was a Russian-born Union officer whose atrocities created much bitterness in the south. The outcry that followed was thought to cause his court martial and dismissal from the army but for some reason the case was dropped and he was promoted to Brigadier General. Little wonder that fear was gripping the people of the south. One of the early tragedies for the King family came when young Eli Shortridge was killed at the Battle of Seven Pines, Virginia on June 30, 1862. Fear and hardships were growing. Salt was a product needed for curing meat, both for civilian use and the Army. When the supply was cut off, saltworks were set up in several southern counties where entire families, sometimes with their slaves, came to the saltworks and pitched camp so as to make enough salt for the winter's use.

At the King home in Montevallo shortages were endured but life and health of its members were of greatest concern. The patriarch of the clan had lived to see his children receive the best education possible, had provided each with a tidy sum of money, and set an example in living that he hoped each would follow. His health was failing and he was distressed with occurring events and how they would affect his loved ones. He was to be spared some of the trag-

edies of war however, for on a day in June of 1863 he left his worldly worries behind. In the obituary column of the *South Western Baptist* July, 1863, these lines related the sad news of this publication's good friend:

"Departed from this life, on the 25th day of June, Col. Edmund King, in the 82nd year of his age. Our venerable Bro. whose labors of love have so familiarized his name with the Baptists of the state has gone to his rest. He moved from Georgia while in the meridian of life and settled in Montevallo, where he reared a large family who though suffered over the Confederacy are now left to mourn his departure. For near half a century he has been engaged in his Master's service and though he bears the reputation of a liberal contributor to the cause of Christ, perhaps aside from his immediate family none can more effectively feel his loss than the feeble little church from which it has pleased God to remove him. He possessed unwavering faith, read his Bible more than other books and when his hour of departure arrived he could cheerfully say he had lived long enough. Death seemed to have no terror for him and when a pious old servant tried to console him with the hope of recovery he calmly replied, "Yes, I should soon be well" — meaning in his eternal state. When asked if he ever suffered any pain he always replied in the negative. Though possessed perhaps with more than ordinary strength and vigor for one his age, for the last few years has been on the decline. Early in the spring of the present year his digestive organs began to fail which produced a change from a gradual to a more rapid decline of health. He retained his memory and was apparently conscious to the last. On the afternoon of the 25th a peculiar expression from his face indicated that his sun was about to set. Mrs. S., his daughter, who watched him through his last illness, inquired if all was well. A gentle nod and silent quiver of the lips answered, "All is well." Around his bedside gathered his family and friends, among them his servants, his brethren, and his pastor, and while wading the cold stream he was supported by their prayers, together with the mournful strains of his favorite hymn:

"Oh, sing to me of heaven  
When I am called to die."

Thus, like the faithful patriarch, he gave up the ghost and died in a good old age, and full of years and was gathered to his people. A number of his friends formed a procession and followed his remains to the church where his funeral was preached and from thence to the family burial place and deposited beside those who had gone before."

R. F.

This had been a terrible strain on Elizabeth Shortridge but life had to go on. Other troubles had to be borne.

Colonel A. D. Streight brought his Union raiders into Alabama intent on cutting railroad connections so as to stop the supply of military aid to the confederate soldiers. These Yankees knew their way around in North Alabama because they were guided by two companies of cavalry made up of men from Alabama who had joined the Union side. (By the end of the war some 2,500 men from the south had joined the Union Army). To oppose Gen. Streight, General Nathan B. Forrest was sent. He was a brilliant young military man who had come up through the ranks and who brought new ideas to rout the enemy. He led his men into battle rather than send them and it is said that Forrest had as many as twenty-nine horses shot from under him. It was he whom the 15 year old girl, Emma Sansom, guided across the creek at Gadsden after Streight had burned the bridge to keep the Confederates from pursuing his troops. After four days of hard fighting, Streight surrendered his exhausted men and they were sent as prisoners to Richmond on the same railroad which had been his mission to destroy.

As encouraging as this report was there were others which gave less hope as indicated in these news items:\*

Jackson—

"Another day has passed without any new developments. The enemy were firing incendiary shells into the city all the evening, setting fire to one whole block of buildings which were destroyed. Another division of Burnsides' command reached Grant this evening."

"The enemy kept up a heavy shelling all night. One ball passed through Gen. Johnston's quarters without injury to anyone."

Jackson — July 16

"An entire block of the city was destroyed by the enemy's shells yesterday. Not a gun fired by the enemy this morning. Various conjectures indulged in regard to their silence but the well informed think they are trying to flank us on our right, as their cavalry made an attempt to cross four miles above last night. Capt. Ferguson, of the U. S. Battery was mortally wounded by the sharpshooters yesterday."

The tide of battle grew stronger and steadily worse. Chancellorsville was fought in May of '63 and Gettysburg in July. People of the south were becoming disillusioned and bitter. Another trage-

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\**South Western Baptist.* 1863

dy befell the Shortridge family. Another son, Frank Forrester, age 19, died in the Battle of Atlanta.

Life went on in Alabama, however. John G. Shorter and Thomas Watts were fighting the political battle for governorship. Watts won but his term of office was racked with many disastrous events. Amid the gloom of seemingly overwhelming problems in both politics and war, a note of humor and human interest would not be amiss here. Judge George Washington Stone, the same gentleman who had been the victor over George Shortridge in a political endeavor earlier, was weary of war, was lonely and depressed, and most desirous of acquiring a wife. (He had lost by death two wives whom he adored.) He was courting a Widow Wright at this time and penned this verse:\*

#### "WIDOWER'S LAMENT"

I'm very tired of single life —  
The truth is that I want a wife  
A dear, good wife to keep me human.  
A loving-hearted, honest woman.

I'd have her neither stiff nor haughty;  
Neither young nor old; say forty;  
Not too fierce, nor yet a dreamer,  
Not a sulk, and not a screamer.

But somehow it has been my luck  
To love the flowers that others pluck;  
To see the fruit that most I prize  
All gobbled up before my eyes.

I never did a-courting go,  
Or rig me out to play the beau,  
But that the lady, ere I met her,  
Found another she liked better.

It seems to me that surely fate  
Ordains my lot to be too late;  
That all my fondest hopes she dashes,  
And knocks my love-plots all to smashes.

I can't repress a lingering fear;  
That soon or later I shall hear  
That all the women were paired out  
Before my turn was brought about.

Yet, though I'm rather old and ugly,  
My firm joints still fit me snugly,  
And if this war lasts, it may rid us  
Of half the rogues that grab the widows.

---

\*William Brantley. *Chief Justice Stone.*

Perhaps it was the humor and optimism of such gentlemen that helped the discouraged southerners to live through the last bitter times of conflict.

There was much bickering and discontent in state government over the conscription law. There were some with large plantations who declined to serve in the militia because they proposed to be "bonded agriculturists." But Alabama in general, had supplied many soldiers, arms, and clothing to the cause, as well as maintained a hospital in Virginia to care for her wounded. In fact, the liberal supply to other states left Alabama almost unprotected and now help was needed at home. The big problem of course was the little help available.

Whether it was the pressure to serve or an overwhelming desire to protect his family is not known but whatever the reason, George Shortridge joined, as a private, Captain John P. West's Shelby County's Volunteer Militia and went to do his bit for the South. With son, George, Jr., already serving his homeland, and sons Eli and Frank lost to the war, Elizabeth was left at home with only the younger children and devoted servants to help as best they could.

Haggard, half-starved, wounded men began appearing on the scene across Alabama, trying to make their way home. When by chance one happened by King House, Elizabeth Shortridge never failed to give aid and attention.

The North realized they could no longer let the heart of the Confederacy beat. Alabama had to be taken — its furnaces and factories had to go.

By early 1864, General John Logan had established a major Union headquarters in Huntsville. Federal troops occupied the area of Stevenson and southerners sensed the end was near.

*Harper's Weekly*\* published a picture showing southern belles dancing the Virginia Reel in Huntsville with Federal soldiers and "otherwise hobnobbing with the enemy."

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\*Department of Archives and History. Montgomery



The author showing a guest the kitchen fireplace.

## *Chapter Nine*

By early 1865, resistance from the South seemed to be collapsing. Grant, however, wanted heart *and* soul so he selected a bright young star from his army, General James H. Wilson, and gave him the task of capturing Alabama. Having been a commander in Sherman's Cavalry, he came with experience. He persuaded Grant to give him 13,500 officers and men rather than the 5,000 offered — and he was ready for the challenge.

It was March before the flood-swollen Tennessee River receded enough for him and his troops to ford it and begin his raid. To deceive his enemy, he separated his troops into three divisions until they regrouped at Elyton. He sent General John T. Croxton to attack Tuscaloosa while Wilson, with 9,000 of the troops pushed toward Selma, the big target of the raid. Croxton's burning of the University as well as factories, bridges, etc., is well known and when his task was completed he left to join Wilson in Georgia.

When Wilson reached Montevallo, he made *Kingswood* his headquarters and his men pitched camp on the plantation grounds. It is said that in anticipation of the invasion, the devoted slaves encircled the house to protect Mrs. Shortridge and children but Wilson's keen interest in *Kingswood* prevented harm to the plantation as well as to the family. It was anything but pleasant, however, to put up with the enemy and she soon grew weary of the imposition. Besides, she had already endured the occupation of General Lowell's Confederate troops who had camped on the plantation previously.

The 4th Division of Wilson's forces defeated two small units outside of Montevallo; one of which destroyed the furnaces at Brierfield. From Montevallo, he continued to Selma, which he left in ruins, and then on to Montgomery. On the path of destruction, homes were looted and burned, factories and businesses destroyed, mules and horses were shot, both white and black were robbed, and anything of value taken. These were the unnecessary acts of war. No wonder that people of the south were bitter.

Mary Gordon Duffee\* in her sketches of Alabama records her thoughts of these atrocities in these words:

"During March I had passed through Oxmoor, peaceful and hospitable. On the afternoon of April 13, I gazed upon the scene of ruin at the same spot that makes me shudder now as I recall it.

I was in Montevallo when the invading army entered. All my brothers were at the front and my parents were at Brount Springs, sixty-five miles away. About sunset, rolling drums and prancing horses in a long column approached Montevallo. All night we waited, knowing a battle was imminent as the forces of Roddey and Forrest were on the southern outskirts.

Firing began at the depot and a heavy skirmish ensued.

Two days afterwards, Miss Emmie Bailey and I organized a band of women and children to go down the railroad to Brierfield to search for the wounded and dying.

Then I resolved to make my way home by foot. I met starvation on every hand and was grateful for the hominy and buttermilk graciously shared with me. After a walk of 30 miles, I reached Oxmoor at the close of a tenderly beautiful spring day. There I hoped to receive food and shelter to relieve my hunger and fatigue. As I neared the familiar scene, my heart sank at the strange stillness of the landscape. Here and there a broken down army horse searched for tender young grass. Wild blue flags and wild honeysuckle bloomed among the rocks. The tranquility was overwhelmingly lonely.

At last I mustered courage to venture on and found myself standing by blackened ruins, against the wall of the furnace tower. As I contemplated the silent houses up on the hill and the deserted road, the awful truth flashed upon me in despair. Blinded with tears, I knelt and prayed.

Rising, I saw smoke issuing from a chimney at the summit of a high hill. Wearily I climbed the steep and rugged path to this sign of security. I did not presume to ask for food; only a sleeping place on the floor. The kind head of the family was the son-in-law of old man Moses Stroup, the pioneer iron-maker. He and his family welcomed me graciously and shared with me what little they had.

Refreshed by a night of unbroken sleep, I bade these blessed friends adieu at an early hour and wended my solitary way through the wretched ruins. The morning sun shone

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\*Phillip Grosse, "Letters from Alabama", U.S.A., London Press, 1859.

from a cloudless sky and I lingered amid those mournful scenes, then pursued my journey up the road, past the silent homes, only one or two were left to greet me. On the summit I stopped to view the grave of a child of Mr. Haynes, a scientist. To my horror a wayfarer told me that stragglers from the army had broken the marble stones and dug into graves in search of treasure. I hurried away.

The following morning, through a lane of mud and water, I made my way to Elyton. But ere I retired that night I knelt and dedicated my future life to the glory of my native state."

It might be noted here that Mary Gordon Duffee was reported to have been a spy for the Confederate Army although this was never proven. It is said she brought information on foot from Kentucky to Elyton on the size of Sherman's Army. Another tale had her spying when Federal troops occupied Arlington. Perhaps this was because she was a friend of the Mudd's who lived there during the Civil War. There are other exciting stories connected with her life but whether true or fiction, she added much to the history of our state. In her last years she lived on Duffee's Mountain at Blount Springs and was looked after by a negro couple who brought meals from their own cabin because she had such a fear of fire she would not build one in her own dwelling. Mrs. Mary Etta Coleman, of Birmingham, a descendant of the Peyton King family, tells of going up the mountain from their summer home in Blount Springs to take Miss Duffee her mail. Although eccentrically dressed, Miss Duffee was kind to the children and frequently gave them cookies.

\* \* \*

Alabama had suffered from the war and was to suffer even more. Factories had been wiped out and products were scarce. When they could be found, few people had the price to pay. Coffee sold for \$20.00 per lb. and a pair of shoes cost \$150.00.

Abraham Lincoln resisted the temptation of vengeance on the South. He asked for "malice toward none and charity for all." He could have been influenced by the fact that his wife was a southerner.

How had the King family fared? What had they contributed to the cause?

Oldest son, *William Woodson*, having a large fortune invested in a sugar plantation and slaves, lost everything as a result of the conflict. The Morganza Levee was cut and his plantation was flooded. His slaves were freed. He had developed bronchial trouble in middle life and went to France to recuperate. Although he came home much improved he was never really cured. A racking cough pursued him thereafter thus making him physically unfit to take an active part in the war between the states but he did his duty by equipping a substitute at his own expense.

His first wife, Catherine Drish of Demopolis, Alabama, was the mother of his first three children: Cora, John Rigor Drish, and Edmund Woodson Drish. Cora died as a child; the two boys lived with Grandfather Drish during childhood years.

Having married Sarah Ann Miller of New Orleans in 1848, William Woodson went back to New Orleans to start life anew. With a wife, seven children to support and educate, and a ten-dollar gold piece in his pocket he had a hard beginning. Although barred from practice of law in the United States courts on account of the "iron-clad oath" demanded by Federal authorities, he was employed by the lawyers who came to New Orleans with the Federal Army. With some few who could take the oath, he would sit in the court room at their side and prompt them in the examination of witnesses and in the arguments of their cases. In this way he was able to support himself and family until the "Iron Clad Oath" was repealed. It wasn't long until he got back much of his old practice and was well on his way to another fortune. He became an intimate friend of John Slidell, participated in the political life of the city and state and through his professional career lent a helping hand to many young struggling lawyers.

*Edmund Thomas King* and a Captain Fuller raised a company of 130 men and were assigned to the command of the gunboat "Cotton", a converted river steamboat. With this boat during the absence of Captain Fuller, he defended the mouth of the Bayou Leche against six of the enemy's boats until out-flanked by the land forces. He fought his way through their batteries and forces stationed on both sides of the narrow stream and brought the "Cotton" safely to New Iberia where she was sunk by orders of General Kirby Smith. He was then sent to the Red River and defended the mouth of that river for some time against Commodore Porter's fleet with the gunboat "Mary T." His boat having been disabled and in a crippled condition, steamed up the river to Shreveport. He was then sent with his company to Fort DeBussey on the Red River and his defense of this fort gave General Taylor time to concentrate his forces to fight in the Battle of Mansfield. The fort was carried by storm and in a final charge he lost his right eye and was made a prisoner. He was soon exchanged and again placed in command of the "Mary T" crossing cattle over to the left bank of the Mississippi River from a small bayou near the mouth of the Red River. In a few months he had gotten across over 30,000 head of cattle to feed the Army of Tennessee.

*Peyton Griffin King*, after having participated in the famous Charleston Convention was disgusted with the tide of folly that was sweeping the country just before the war and quietly voted for Stephen A. Douglas for president in protest of the recklessness of thought and deed which was prevalent. At the same time he went about preparing for participation in a war he deemed inevitable. In June, 1861, Peyton, along with his brother, Frank Ragan, repaired to the Army in Virginia. They temporarily connected themselves as inde-

pendent volunteers with Captain Tracy's company of the Fourth Alabama Regiment and in a few days had the honor of participating actively in the glorious victory of Manassas and stood by Captain Tracy in the gallant but ineffectual stand he made for the recovery of Colonel Jones' dead body. In that brief stand, this devoted army remnant was the target for overwhelming numbers of the enemy at near quarters and at the moment they fell back to escape being surrounded, Mr. King received a minnie ball that broke both bones of his right arm below the elbow. This disqualified him for further service for many months. During the rest of the war he had a company in Colonel W. M. Brooks' Regiment, mostly operating in the Mobile defenses.

No war record was found of *Shelby's* but letters from his wife indicate that he was a minister during at least part of this period.

*Frank Regan*, youngest of the King sons, was making a continental tour of Europe when the war started. He was in Constantinople on his way to the Holy Land when he received the news. He left Europe at once, going by way of Paris to deposit his money in a bank there. He had to run the blockade at Norfolk, Virginia and when he reached the army at Manassas, he joined the Fourth Alabama Regiment which has been mentioned. After fighting in the first battle he returned home, raised a Cavalry Company and was attached to Wheeler's Division.

*Louisa King Acklen* is said to have died of a broken heart during the war (1862) after getting news that her son, William, had been killed in battle. It was reported that she took to her bed after receiving the news and was never up again. Her husband died shortly afterwards and they were survived by son, Theodore, and daughter, Corrine.

*Elizabeth King Shortridge* had endured the hardships of the war. She suffered immensely when son Eli was killed while gallantly trying to rally his company in Virginia and when Frank Forrester met his death while scouting at the rear of Sherman's Army near Atlanta. Though mortally wounded, Frank refused to surrender, killed two of his assailants and wounded several others by firing his pistol at them as they advanced to dispatch him.

Elizabeth's son-in-law, Reuben Gaines, served on General Joe Wheeler's staff and was wounded in the war. In 1866, the Gaines moved to Texas where his career was unusually brilliant and successful.

Paul H. Lewis, one of the three Lewis sons who made their home with the Shortridges, fought gallantly through the war as a lieutenant of Company "C", Tenth Alabama Regiment and was wounded four times.

The war was over but the right to return to normalcy was just beginning. It was not to be easy for anyone living in the south, including the King family.

George Shortridge, husband of Elizabeth, returned from the war without injuries. George Jr. was not so fortunate. He had a leg shot off and was sent home shortly before the war ended. It is not known whether the two families were living in the old homestead at the time but it is known that Marie Shortridge, daughter of George Jr., was born in the old home place (1867) \*so it is possible that the George Jr. family was living in King House and perhaps George Sr. and Elizabeth had moved back to Holly Brook farm, their own plantation. The following letter to Frank King who at this time was in New Orleans studying law in his brother's office, indicates that the family property might be for sale.

Montevallo, 19th July 1866.

Friend Frank,

I read your letter of the 5th of this inst. and was glad to hear that you was well. I also read yours of some time ago and answered it and at that time thought that I would be able to come to see you ere this time. I do not know at this time when I will be able to come over to N. O. but will be there sometime this spring at which time I will be able to pay you the \$1,000 on my note to you that I promised you. I hope that you may be able to make your business arrangements, will help you all I can. I have not sold my cotton yet — only a part of it and my trip to Mobile and N. O. depends on the cotton market but will, I think be there within the next six weeks and will help you all I can.

Peyton has bought my father-in-law's land in Jefferson County and has gone up there to live. He was here a few days ago and was in good health and sound in body and mind.

I have succeeded in getting the wall built around your father's grave 60 ft. long and 30 ft. wide, 2 ft. thick with coaping on top. It cost \$598 which I have paid out of my own money with the exception of \$150 collected from prf. v. Johnson and \$75 from or paid by Peyton and I do not know of any money that will come in to the Estate soon. I think that we have a fine job done that is a good one. Judge Shortridge and Peyton rented the land, houses and C for this year.

We have made application to the Probate Judge for an order to sell the land. I will see Wm. and would like to see Thos. when I come over about their interest in the Estate and know what they want to do with it. Will not be able to sell the land before next fall I don't think. I have nothing new to write you. Write me soon. Look out for me and wife about last of March.

Your friend.

French Nabors

\*Marie Shortridge was the mother of Mrs. Bessie Mussey whose portrait hangs in King House and who has provided much information for this book.

## *Chapter Ten*

In 1868, Alabama was readmitted to the Union. Now the business of establishing her rightful status could begin in earnest. Politics was again getting its share of attention, although it was not uppermost in all people's mind. In fact, in the Shortridge household there was sadness which overrode any other interest at the moment. The physical condition of George Jr. went from bad to worse and on August 20 of that year, he died. He left his young widow, the former Victoria Echols of Selma and three small children, Elizabeth, age 5; Eli, age 4 and Marie, age 2. He is buried in the family cemetery.

William Webb Shortridge who was 16 years of age at this time was away from home in pursuit of an education. The youngest and last of the Shortridge boys was soon to take on more responsibility but right now he was more interested in the "here and now" as indicated by this letter.

Mobile, Nov. 16, 1868.

My dear Uncle,

I received your letter last week and one from Branch.\* I will answer his in a few days. I went to the Theatre last night and was highly pleased. The play was "Under the Gas Light." The performance was good, the scenery beautiful and the music charming.

On yesterday, I went to church twice. In the morning I went to the St. Frances Street Methodist Church and in the evening to the Cathedral. In the Methodist Church was preached the funeral sermon of Mr. Suly, the late minister of the church who died a few days since.

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\*Branch was a cousin — son of William Woodson King. Webb Shortridge and Branch King were about the same age (16 and 17) at this time.

In the Catholic Church I saw a great many beautiful pictures and the church was elegantly carved. I think they have the finest singing that I ever heard. Their mode of worship is very solemn and impressive.

Business is very dull. Scarcely any cotton coming in. And the market is so low that there is not much cotton sold. The cotton factories are all afraid that the amount of cotton will be smaller than last year.

The steamboats say that they carry more cotton up than they bring down the River. The only cotton of any consequence is received by the M. and O. R. R.

I must close. Write soon.

Yours truly

W. W. Shortridge

Louisa Shortridge Gaines and husband Reuben lived in Clarksville, Tennessee for a short time before moving on to Texas and greater professional success. A letter to Frank Ragan King from R. R. Gaines was apparently in answer to a request from Frank.

Clarksville (Tenn) April 26, 1867

Dear Frank,

Your letter containing the application to Governor Throckmorton for appointment as Commission of Deeds was received a week ago. It came in the night and next morning very early May Wright left for New Orleans and Msp. and I was unable to get his endorsement upon the paper. Mr. Epperson not having yet returned and his return being uncertain, I forwarded it with a letter to the Governor recent in this town. I presume there will be no difficulty about the appointment. I wrote that I would send the fees to the office issuing the (*illegible*) upon learning the amount (I presume there will be some fee incident to issuing the document) and requesting the Commission might be sent directly to you at New Orleans.

Business of all kind is very dull with us. The season is unfavorable to the farmers. We are, however, expecting work upon the railroad (which is projected to run through this country) to begin very soon and hope that it will bring money and will add impetus to all branches of business.

Lou's health is very good. We received by Mr. Scott a statement of your purchases upon our account and with reasonable luck will receive the goods themselves in due course of ox wagons. It only requires a little more time to get goods from Jefferson to this point than it does to cross the

Atlantic. We are much obliged to you for the trouble you have taken on our account. Also to May Cary. Hoping to hear from you, I am very truly

Your friend,

S/R. R. Gaines

Frank was admitted to the bar in 1868 and moved to Iberville in the Parish of Vermilion. He became a leading lawyer in this and adjoining parishes of Louisiana. It would seem from the letters here that many members of the family relied on him for financial help as well as placing him in the role of confessor and confidant.

Meridian, Msp. Nov. 1st, 1868.

Dear Frank,

Yours, of late date, came to hand during a temporary absence, hence the delay in responding. I have been on the eve of writing to you for some time past with reference to my utter inability to pay you just now a single dollar but without special reason (beyond the *((illegible))*) of disagreeable news being unpleasant) have delayed it until now. Your kind letter recalls me to sense of my duty as a debtor and friend. We planted this year 250 acres of cotton which, from a multiplicity of disaster, such as exep. of rain, worms, rot and other causes too numerous to mention, will yield the sum total of 25 bales, this crop *will not pay expenses*. When I gave my attention entirely to the production of this pitiful crop I hoped to be able to do something for you. I do not expect to be able to pay any other claim and had we made even half a crop could have responded to your wishes when called upon. Beyond your claim we do not have more than \$1000 which you will perceive leaves us in at least a hopeful condition. I don't know what to do. It seems from a variety of causes planting is now the most uncertain profession or business one can pursue, and I have not yet determined whether I shall try it again. The freedman is growing clamorous for greater immunities and priviledges in anticipation of Grant's election and is more difficult to contract with than heretofore. However, I will keep you posted of my prospects and intention at the end of the year. I think it more than probable that I shall try the cotton again with the hope of "better luck next time." Many of our sanguine friends think the radicals will catch a "Tartar" in Grant and say they (Rads) are so much experienced to know what he will do as we are. It cannot be to their interest to impoverish and hurt the southern people, now they have exercised another four years leave of power and revenge and fanaticing *((illegible))* than so far, that even the most preteritine cannot divine what is to come. If we can have quiet restored, with

the present price of cotton, I think I can make something to pay you with, but if not, my chance will be gloomy enough.

I am glad to know you are doing something at the law and hope your remaining debtors will be more fortunate than myself this year.

I think it possible I may visit your city in December and we may then confer more freely together.

With kindest regards to all our kind relations in your city and high esteem for yourself I remain

Yours truly,

Your friend and cousin  
S/H. Sidney King

June 28, 1869.

Dear Bro. Frank,

I have only one moment to write a note and send by my neighbor, Mr. Selby. The examination is over and everything passed with credit to both pupil and teacher. My ten year old lady acted her part charmingly. So much pleased were the assembly that they called loudly for it to be acted over the next night, which was done. Kate deserved praise for her resolution and endurance for she was sick enough to be in bed but would not give up. She says she will write to you soon and also that she did not make us feel ashamed of her. I write this note asking you if you can get me one and a half yards like the sample I send like Kate's dress. I wish that much more to finish the dress. Please send by Mr. Selby. I'll write to you soon. Love to sister Sarah and family. I close with much love from us all to our absent Brother.

Your sister,

S/ Mary C. King

p.s. I feel very unwell — broke down with work and loss of sleep. I had a house full for four days.

Montevallo. 5th March 1869.

Dear Frank,

On my return from Jefferson Co. today I received your 2 letters of the 17 and 20 of July. I do not understand why it takes letters so long to come from N. O. to this place for I have been looking for a letter from you for some time. I saw Peyton at Elyton. He has sold 200 acres of his land that is not worth a cent to his farm for \$4000 and he will come out all right on his purchase. Oakley is at home now and

he is ready to pay over the balance of the money that he has not paid or deposited in dfts. in the bank for collection which is ready and in Selma subject to my order. I will go to Selma next week and get the exchange on N. O. or send you a check on some commission merchant for the money. I will have to stay here until after next Monday for I have a sell of Sims' lands on next Monday.

Will go to Selma as soon as I can and will send you the money at once. I will bring your letter to Oakley when I come to N. O. Your are mistaken about it and you will be convinced when you see it. I will do the best I can about the (*illegible*) matter. Will attend to it at court. Will be with it as if was my own. You may rely on the Oakley money coming as soon next week as I can get to Selma.

I have been gone several days to Elyton (one week) and have to be here until next Monday. I have done all that I could for you in all of your business here and I am satisfied that you will be well pleased with it when you are fully in possession of all of the facts which I will give you when I come to N. O. which will be about the 1st of April. Pup joins me in love to you. Her mother is not good. Give Mrs. and family my best regards. I will stay with you when I come to N. O. a week or 10 days. Do you stay at the St. James yet? Write me.

S/French Nabors

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The sun still shone on the south; the rains came, and plants grew but not always abundantly enough to meet production needs. The orgy of reconstruction was not yet over and it was especially felt by Mollie King whose husband, Shelby, was a minister in Newton, Mississippi. Her letter is very revealing and is copied as written.

Newton, July 5, 1869.

My Dear Frank,

I have just received your letter and hasten to reply for fear that I may not have time again soon. I had but a few moments before biden adieu to my husband for the week, he is living on the plantation now and gets his pass to come home every Saturday night but he don't have a free nigro's chance for he can't stay with me Sunday but must preach to an ungrateful set of people and unpaying two. Sometimes I can't help but esclame, oh the people with whom we live — they never ascend higher than bread and meat and a calico dress for the body and intellectually not higher than to excell in tale bearing. I became disgusted at times and often

think if I were back at the plantation there I would stay, to not want to see anyone. Let me give you an instance. The dress you bought for me I made in the height of fashion, put many flowers and (*illegible*) on it but nothing more than the good. I wore it to the examination and a woman behind me said loud enough for me to hear her, "that's what goes with our preacher's hard earned money. When we take it out of our *mouthes* she puts in on her *back*." Twas all I could do to keep from telling her that not one cent of her money went to buy that or anything else for me but if my fine dress was offensive to her I would change my seat. I am not understood by half the people here — neither do I care but wish so much that we could leave here and I am determined if persuasion can do anything to get away from here another year to exert myself to the uttermost. Unless we do a great deal better on the farm than ever before we might as well give it away. Tis said in that neighborhood that every one will make a better crop than they have done for years. The seasons have been more favorable than for years. Mr. King has been there ever since the examination working trying to get his crop worked over so that he can let me have the mules to go to Marion. I am very anxious to go and so Mr. K. can't afford the money for me to take my trip on the carrs. I have consented to go by private conveyance or rather in a wagon. Oh how I dread the long hot tiresome wagon ride but still I must go. When we moved to Miss. Mr. K. promised me a visit home once a year as long as Father and Ma lived, he has been unable to fulfill it. Now I must go for I do not think from all accounts that my dear Ma cant live long and I must see her once more if possible. Oh how tantalizing to have the carrs pass my door every day and know in so short a time they could bear me to my dear ma and not be able to pay expenses. Oh for riches I so often sigh. Yet they come not nor never will under this government. I hate a Yank and yet I wish one would come and give us a big price for our place as one did Mr. Parnell a few days since. The Watson place was bought by one last week cash down. Do you feel that our generation will ever have peace and prosperity again? You speak of hard work for years to come, suppose you were in our fix, four helpless children. The supporting of six evolving upon two sickly beings. Frank, any lot is a hard one now with no one to help me. Since warm weather set in it goes right hard with me to cook over the hot stove. If we could afford sugar Ide make tea cakes and pies enough to do me several days and not have to cook every day but to buy sugar by the lb and that scarce I can't afford it. Oh for the good old days when we could go to a barrell of sugar.

Mr. King expected to have made arrangements with some merchant for his groceries in N. Orleans but so far has

failed. Mr. K. says he dont believe Ide mind cooking if I had plenty of good things to cook so I would not. When you come I'll try to give you something good to eat or rather well cooked whatever it be. You must come to see us if only for a few days. I want to take a peep at your dear face.

My heart is growing sick for want of affection from relatives. The bundles of love that was bestowed when last with them have been drawn from so long that it needs replenishing. The sweets are nearly all untouched.

July 6 — I could not finish yesterday so to it this morning. Although I am so nervous I can hardly write I'll tell you what I've done this morning and see if you wonder. I got up at halfpast 4, got breakfast and cleaned up the house and to the wash place went. Kate and I and it is just now nine o'clock and every article of clothing for my family is washed and out to dry. It is my first attempt to wash. My poor back is most broken, the skin off my rist, yet it is better than begging negroes as I did last week also have it done half way and paying them big wages too. I expect it will make me sick but I can't help it. Oh for good health and strength is the burden of my sigh. You asked what was our plans for the future — they are wavering. Mr. K. rather thinks we will go back to the plantation where he can superintend his farm and take the school at Garlandville which the people are anxious for. The Newtonites say that they don't intend he shall leave. They are trying to make him one hundred dollars a month besides what extras he can make. The two places are rivaling each other. Which gives the most he will accept. I want to go home. The people of Meridian want him also — he has gained great reputation as a teacher. The people are anxious for a fine school here and want him to build it up. Dear bro I fear you will think me troublesome. I sent the note by Mr. Selby thinking he was coming back — he will remain there; wait another opportunity of sending the goods — if you find one please send me one corset. I can't get any here to suit me. I want one not to cost much. Send me two yards of the material and also another bolt of trimming like the one sis Sarah sent to finish her dress. She wore it at the examination but it is not finished. My paper is out and nothing of interest written. I felt like talking and had no one to talk to so I write. Dear bro you don't know how greatful to you I feel for your kind offer to try and get an advancement for Mr. King. I know he will wish it — he would not if he could collect what is oweing to him here but he cant. Write to him what you think you can do, he will not be home till next Monday — he is at Garlandsville working himself with the plow and wagon. Dear bro write again soon and come to see us. Give much love to bro Will and family. Tell sister Sarah I thank them for the magazine and pattern which

I received a few days since. My children all send much love to you and their cousins. Write to Kate, Frank — she will answer your letters and I want her to write often. Remember you have a sister in Miss. who always loves you. Tis your sister

S/Mollie King

Salome, brother Nathaniel's widow, indicates that Frank helped with a problem concerning Nat's youngest child and only son, Sibley.

Dear Frank,

If you know the address of Col. B. B. Lewis in N. York please send it to me soon and obliged. For a long time I haved looked for you or a letter. Hope as you have receiv-ed your health that you will soon straighten your professional duties in Abbeville so far as to permit you to quit or to visit.

Sibley has made marked progress already and each day I rejoice more thankfully that your kindness has placed him in a situation to improve and make a man of him.

The boarding arrangements are in many respects objectionable but I hope I may be able to remedy that to some extent next season.

Mr. R. begs for Sibley to study two or three hours a day with him this summer but I think two months vacation will better fit him for next winters campaign.

With love to all,

Your aff. sister  
S/Salome

Through the spring and summer of 1870, things were relatively quiet in Alabama. Conditions were far from being pre-Civil War but they were progressing beyond the point of providing bread for the table. George and Elizabeth Shortridge were at home, alone, except for the occasional visit from the children. Youngest son, William Webb, was receiving a liberal education at school and he could write an interesting letter. This one contained news of Montevallo as well as Summerfield, Mass.

Summerfield Jany, 23, 1870

My dear Uncle,

I received your welcome letter some days ago and hasten to answer it. I had just returned from home where I spent three weeks. I found Pa some better and was enabled to return to school. He has suffered a great deal since he was

taken sick, but it is mostly owing to his own imprudence. I did not want to leave him while he was so sick but he wished me to be at school. I am afraid that he is growing worse, and if so I will return home soon.

Mr. Morgan died while I was at Montevallo. He has had within the last two years many hard attacks and has been as often warned by the physician of death if he did not alter his course. He seemed determined to kill himself and an awful death it was. He died within a week and has gone to his final abode to account for his course. He was followed to the grave by many friends lamenting his end. You know with his faults that he was a generous and warm hearted man. Peace be to his ashes. And may all his faults be hidden in the grave.

I have learned to appreciate the benefits of an education and have been studying hard this session. I am studying Boudon Geometry, Greek, and reading Virgil in Latin. We had public speaking on last Friday. It was Mr. Mapey's intention to have us speak every three months publicly. Just before Christmas was the time for the first speaking. But so many of the boys left for home before the time that he had it postponed.

I am very much pleased with the school here. I think it is the best in the state. The reason for my partiality may be that is is so far superior to any that I have ever before attended. It is a great incentive to exertion to be thrown among boys of cultivation and who are students.

We have about sixty scholars, nearly all of whom are from a distance. The Female College has about fifty. Summerfield can boast of some pretty girls.

The school has two Debating Societies connected with it. One of which, the Franklin, I am a member. We have some interesting debates. The Societies will have a joint debate on next Saturday night, the regular night of meeting. The members of both were chosen promiscuously for the debate which promises to be entertaining. I do not wish to tire you farther with the recital of the dull routine of my school life. But as Summerfield can afford no news, I had no choice but this to write of.

I received a letter from Lelia last week. She is well.

Give my love to all of Uncle William's family. I think that Fred or Branch one might write to me as I wrote to them last.

Tell Chut Carey that I will write to him soon.

Write soon.

Your affect. Nephew  
S/Webb S.

George Shortridge's health *did* get worse and on July 29 of that same year (1870) he died and was buried in the King family burial plot.

After the death of his father, Webb Shortridge returned home to Montevallo. It was at this time that he married his brother's widow, Victoria Echols Shortridge. At age 18, a wife and three children, ages 7, 6, and 4, was a big responsibility but the King family members seemed to handle responsibility well.

In 1872, following the pattern of other family members, he was admitted to the bar and began his practice of law. In 1873 he moved to Birmingham for a short while but soon returned to Shelby County and lived at the old homestead for a while. He and Victoria had the beginning of their own family with the arrival of Lucille. Other children born to the couple were: Naomi, Leila, Frank, and William Webb, Jr.

Frank Ragan King was still "lending an ear" to other members of the family and otherwise helping whenever he could. Perhaps it was the fact, as yet, he had no family of his own for which he was responsible that they felt so free to ask for help and advice. It was a tribute to Frank that these relatives wanted to share their activities and accomplishments with him. A letter from nephew Sibley reads:

Mobile June 28, 1874

Dear Uncle,

School has broken up. I would have written sooner but I have been so busy with my lessons that I have not had time. Yesterday I was resting for I was worn out after the closing exercises and today is my first quiet one. We had our exhibition at the Theatre and were complimented by many of the principal men of Mobile for the way in which we recited our pieces and in the "drill" especially. I am very sorry that you were not present. I would have sent you a ticket but it was Wednesday when we got our tickets and Friday night we had our exhibition so I knew that you would not have time to come over. I will send you a ticket anyhow.

I have learned very fast since I have been to the M. M. Academy.\* We had an examination on the 14th and I missed two questions. One was in Latin Grammar, the other in Arithmetic. I knew both of the questions but I was excited for there were a great many people at our examination. I can add four 9's to make a hundred and can put twelve men into seven separate rooms only one in each room. "How's that for high."

\*Mobile Military Academy

Uncle Frank, we will go over home Wednesday. Mama and sister were both at my exhibition. Idyl and Sassie are at home with Grandma. We're all well. Can't you come over? We anticipate fine sport in fishing.

All join me in love.

Your affec. Nephew,

Sibley P. King.

The writer was unable to identify the "bro King" mentioned in the following letter but perhaps it was Shelby who was a minister.

Montevallo, Ala.  
October 27, 1876

Mr. Frank King  
Abbeville, Louisiana

Dear Sir

I will write you at the request of Bro. King to know if it will suit you for him to place 5 bales cotton he has in our hands to pay as far as it goes rent he owes you. Please let me hear from you and I will inform him of your wishes in respect to it. If you like he will take it and be responsible for the amt. to you.

Respt. & C.

H. C. Reynolds & Co.  
Pr. H. C. T.

Another letter from Sibley's mother, Salome King (Nathaniel's widow), reveals an interesting event approaching in Frank's life.

Jackson St. 2nd North of State  
Mobile, July 2nd, 1878

Dear Frank,

I am too sick to go downstairs or to tax my strength with sewing and as I have been owing you a letter so long and as you evince no inclination to write again until that last one is answered, I will, for the pleasure of hearing from you, make a feeble attempt (but the best I am able to) at writing — (illegible) otherwise with me yet. And this is so dark I will not dwell a moment upon it but will at once turn to you and from a flying rumor I have heard to your happy fortune. I heard that you were soon to marry "Miss Lily," and that you were going to Montevallo to live. Is this true? And how soon do you expect to come to Alabama — and may we hope to see you here sometime this summer? Have you yet arranged matters to your satisfaction

in Montevallo and obtained a title to the Homestead? Even if the court refuses to make a deed, could not and would not the heirs themselves perfect your title independently of the court. If you have paid the money or given obligation to the heir and hold their receipts for the same and they in return make you a companion of the claim to the land. I dare venture the assertion that French Nabers can never injure you or impair your title. But as far as the \$1200 commission is concerned you will find expenses incurred for nothing if you try to (*illegible*) with an appeal. That is my opinion and I have had considerable experience in the Alabama mode of administrative life. His charge is exorbitant and the Chancellor might perhaps be induced to reduce the amount but he will never release the Estate from the whole of it.

What was the result of the case against the defaulting Tax Collector? Were you successful?

Have you heard recently from Mr. Finlay and the Galveston claim? Omi's and Ike Jewett's Depositions were taken and forwarded a month ago and I presume the court is in session but have rec'd no late advice. I have told Mr. Miller that I would make an assignment of my interest in that claim, as future security on the money I borrowed last winter.

We see cousin Sarah and family occasionally. Green's health is poor and he is going to Ashville to spend the summer. Allie is in Virginia enjoying a month's recreation. Allie Easter went home to Talladega last week. He has been promoted by the firm — is now cashier as well as clerk.

We are expecting Fred and perhaps Branch tomorrow on an Excursion train from N. Orleans.

We heard from Ala and Peyton about a month ago; they were well and cheerful and happy. The children join me in love to you.

Idyl won high praise for her composition and Examination papers when school closed.

Affectionately,

Sister Salome

P.S.

Corrine writes "What of Frank? I do wish he would pay me a visit. I can't bear to think that he is so indifferent to me now when he once loved me so dearly." I have a long letter from her. She expects to remain at home again this summer.

A letter from Frederick D. King, William's son:

New Orleans June 16, 1876

Dear Uncle,

I herewith enclose an account of money collected and disbursed by me, belonging to you, from Nov. 3, 1875 to date. I find that in January last I made a mistake against you of \$5.00, so today as my account shows I have to your credit \$5.00.

There is a good deal of excitement here about the (*illegible*) convention. The general impression is that Blain will get the nomination. He is considered the easiest man to beat, but if he should be elected he will be a fearful president for the South. In our state politics it is generally considered that Wiltz will get the nomination for governor. No other man in the state is working for it as he is. Do you intend to go to the Baton Rouge Convention?

The family are all well. Grace left the city yesterday for New York. She expects to spend some time with Mrs. Morris on Long Island and then go to Saratoga with Uncle Tom Miller. May is now at Brown's Wells, Mississippi.

I have now very little to do, and what is worse still, no money. I have though a prospect of making a fine fee this summer, and If I do, I will go away late in the summer.

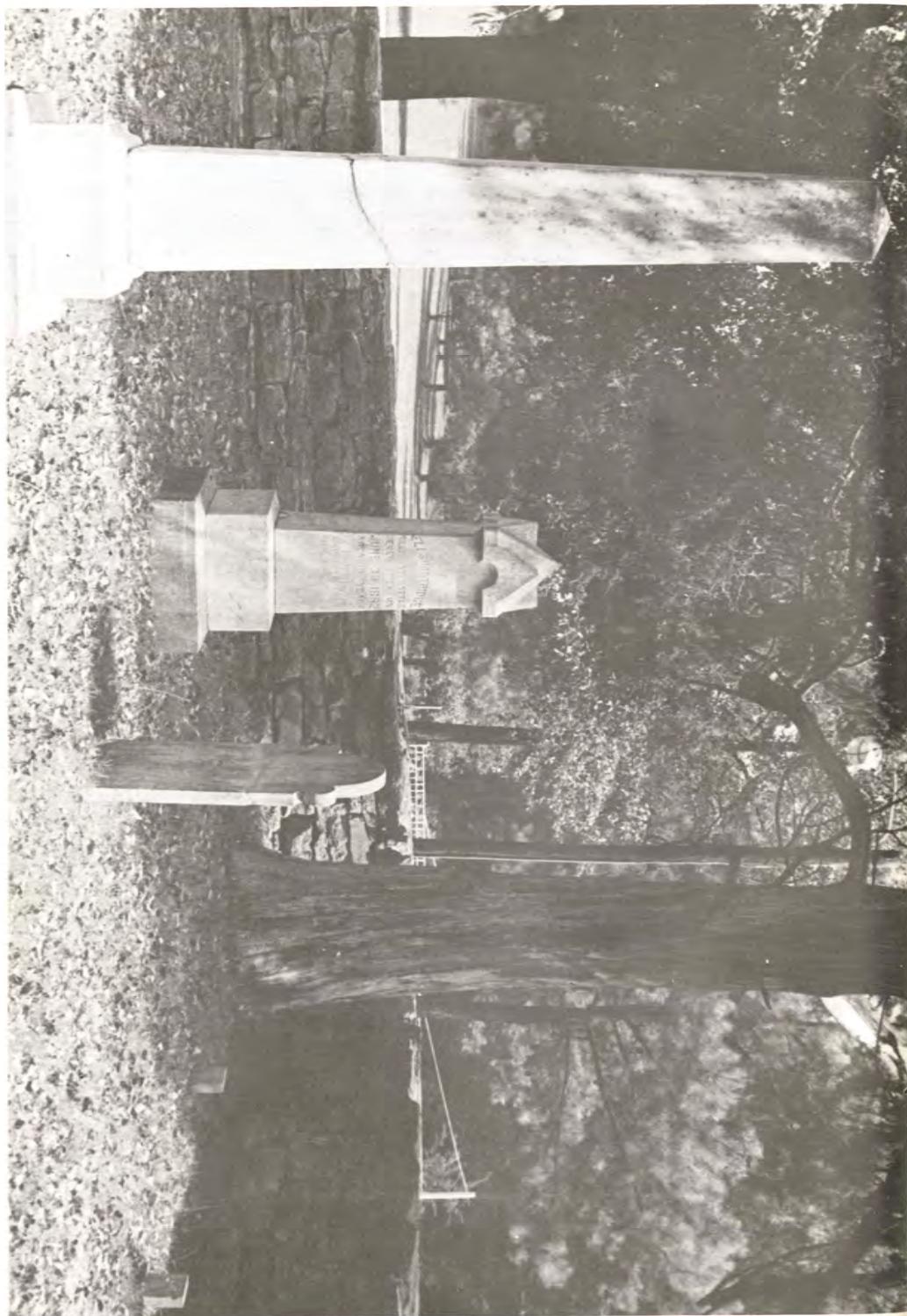
Have you heard lately how Aunt Salome is getting along? We seldom hear from her.

As I expect to hear from you soon I will close. Excuse this short letter for there are three or four gossoping gentlemen around me and I can barely collect my ideas.

Your affectionate nephew,  
Fred D. King

On July 1, 1879, Frank Ragan King married Fannie Veda Snodgrass of Scottsboro, Alabama. She was the daughter of Susan Jane Hill and Col. Alexander Snodgrass; was twenty years old and Frank was thirty-nine. This could have been a surprise to the family since the previous letter from Salome made known a "flying rumor" that he was to marry a "Miss Lily." Though the information was not available, the couple may have lived in Scottsboro for a while since their first child, Frances Veda was born in Scottsboro on December 17, 1880. It was in this year, however, that he bought the old homestead at Montevallo and moved back here. His sister, Elizabeth Shortridge left the old homestead to live with her daughter Louisa Gaines in Texas that same year.

Frank Ragan King was the last family member to occupy the old mansion of Kingswood.



The king family cemetery on the University of Montevallo campus.

## *Chapter Eleven*

Politics in Shelby County took an exciting turn when one of its own became a candidate for governor. Rufus W. Cobb — lawyer, cotton planter, and operator of Shelby Iron Works at Helena sought the high office. He had been a law partner of Burwell Lewis until Lewis became president of the University of Alabama, and had made many friends in Montevallo. These followers were extremely pleased when Mr. Cobb was elected governor in 1878 and re-elected for another two-year term in 1880.

In the old homestead at Montevallo, Morgan, the first son of Frank's was born on April 15, 1882. On October 15, 1883 Frank Ragan, Jr. was the blessed event. One can imagine the thrill of a father with a lovely daughter and two sons on which to lavish his affections after being a foster father to so many others in the large clan. The tragedy of this, however, is the happiness was so short lived. On October 6, 1884 baby Morgan died. He is buried in the family plot.

Fannie King must have thought her world had collapsed when two days later on October 8, 1884 her husband of slightly more than five years died. It is recorded in Sarah King's (William Woodson's wife) notebook that Frank died at the old homestead in the same room in which he drew his first breath.

And so a cycle was complete. The old Mansion was to house the King family no more, although there were several of the children still living.

\* \* \*

*William Woodson*, the eldest son, died in New Orleans in 1881. In the *New Orleans Price Current* — Commercial Bulletin and Shipping List, April 13, 1881 were found these words:

"It is gratifying to reflect that in his last days this good man and meritorious citizen had the consolation of knowing that

he would leave behind him heirs to his virtues and his honors, of whom any present might be proud; and that he had been equally happy in his association by marriage, the entire circle of his connections, cherishing his memory with proper pride. Deeply sympathizing with the afflicted family in their bereavement, we cannot but remember that his record of usefulness and honor has placed him among the leaders in the ranks of intellect and patriotism."

His wife, Sarah, outlived him by twenty years and after her death in 1903, the following article appeared in an unknown Louisiana paper — a copy of which is located in the Archives building in Montgomery.

Mrs. W. W. King  
Death of One of Louisiana's Noblest and Leading Women

"In early years the deceased, whose maiden name was Sarah W. Miller, was married to W. W. King who at that time was a rising young lawyer and who afterwards attained rank among the leading lawyers in the state. Being a University Man, he brought to bear upon his cases a scholarly ability which soon won for him a part in some of the most important litigations of the time.

During Civil War, Mr. King and his family were obliged to leave the city — lived on his plantation in St. Martin Parish. During this time there were hardships to endure but with the strength of will and purpose which characterized her life, Mrs. King bore them all with fortitude . . . . Intellectual, with more than a woman's brain, gifted with powers of conversation, fond of reading and writing, Mrs. King added other traits which characterize the tenderest womanhood. She was noted for helping those in trouble and in this seeking to relieve the afflictions of others, she herself suffered many many self sacrifices. She survived her husband more than twenty years and lived to see her seven children reach manhood and womanhood. They are: Judge Fred King, Branch M. King, Miss Grace King, the distinguished historian and author; Misses May, Annie, Nina and Mrs. F. B. McDowell of Charlotte, N. C. Among her nephews and nieces are: Branch K. Miller, the prominent attorney; Mrs. Dr. De Roaldes and Misses Lottie and Ethel Miller.

Funeral services were conducted at the residence 2221 Prytania Street by the Rev. Beverley Warner, Rector of Trinity Church.

The mourning assembly composed of men and women prominent in the life of the city, and was a magnificent tribute to the ideal character of the deceased who maintained her strength of mind and heart, despite the years which crowned an exemplary life of usefulness, culture and noblest womanhood."

*Elizabeth Shortridge* was now living with her daughter, Louisa (Mrs. Reuben R.) Gaines in Austin, Texas. Mr. Gaines had served as a district judge in Texas after moving there from Clarksville, Tenn. He now was Chief Justice of the state of Texas and his wife was a social leader of her day. After so many sad memories of the war and its hardships, this must have been a delightful home for the aging Elizabeth. She died in 1905 at the ripe old age of eighty-eight.

*Edmund Thomas King* who had married Miss Margaret Marsh of New Iberia was living in New Iberia, Louisiana and died there in 1912.

*Peyton* was still living in Birmingham. He was president of the first association ever organized to build a city and to offer to capitalists at cheap rates 5000 acres of land, most of which Stanton bought and sold to the Elyton Land Company. In 1880 he was a candidate for state senator but spent the later years of his life as a lawyer and business man. He died in Birmingham on November 28, 1893 at age 67.

\* \* \*

As the King family diminished, the town of Montevallo grew. In 1890, the census reported 572 inhabitants. The Montevallo Male Institute which was organized in 1851 had been replaced by the Montevallo Male and Female Collegiate Institute under the supervision of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church. This was closed during the war but the old building was the scene of many farewells as young men left there to fight for the cause of the South during the conflict between the states. After the war, it was reopened as a girls' school. Mr. Sol Bloch of Wilcox County prepared and introduced a bill which established the Alabama Girls Industrial School and the measure was passed by both houses of the legislature February 21, 1892, and it was he who handled the sales of public lands which the school received from Congress in 1898. The school opened its doors on October 12, 1896. By this time there were eight general stores in Montevallo, two livery stables, two drug stores, two fine hotels, one lime kiln, one brick yard, one saw mill, one sash, blind, and door factory, and one newspaper.

An article appeared in the Birmingham Sunday Chronicle on December 19, 1886 concerning people from Montevallo who had attained success in business, society, and personally. One such person was Walter Cleveland, son of the Reverend Cleveland who was pastor of Southside Baptist Church. Reverend Cleveland had just accepted a call to the Baptist Church of Montevallo, and would reside at *Kingswood*, the home belonging to the widow and children of Captain Frank King. No record was found as to how long the home remained in the family but apparently it became the property of Frank Nabors as deeds recorded at Shelby County seat of government show

that Sarah Nabors, widow of Frank, sold the old homestead and property of about 43.40 acres to Alabama Girls Industrial School. The price was \$8,500 — the date was July 21, 1908. The old building now began its use as an infirmary, laboratory for Home Economics students, offices, and classrooms.

The metamorphosis of the old institution in which Edmund King had a keen interest paralleled the growth of the city and state. From the private and early schools, to Alabama Girls Industrial — Alabama Girls Technical School — Alabama Technical Institute and College for Women — Alabama College, and of this date, The University of Montevallo. As it grows there will undoubtedly be more changes; changes to meet the needs of an expanding society. May it, however, still retain the goals and ambitions of its embryo institution to which Edmund King contributed so much and of which he was so proud.



University of Montevallo President and Mrs. Kermit Johnson viewing the portrait of Edmund King Jr. after it was placed in the parlor of King House.

## *Descendants of the King Family*

As has been shown, the sons and daughters of Edmund and Nancy Ragan King were intelligent, creative, well-educated and successful in their chosen endeavors. Each made a contribution, in his or her way, to the times in which they lived. Fortunately this contribution to society did not end with the immediate family. Grandchildren, great and great-great grandchildren continue to uphold the tradition and heritage with which they were so generously endowed. Thus, it would be fitting to include what information is available on these descendants.

The reader should be reminded here that this information is only that which could be found by the writer, who does not assume that it is all inclusive or correct beyond a doubt.

Because family names are repeated in sons, daughters, and relations, an effort has been made to specify the first and second generations by number — listed in order of birth. Sons and daughters of Edmund and Nancy King will also be designated by asterisks.

\* \* \*

### *\*1. William Woodson*

By his first wife, Catherine Drish, there were three children:  
Cora King — died while young.  
John Ragen Drish King — 1842.  
Edmund Woodson Drish King — 1845.

By his second wife, Sarah Ann Miller:

Frederic Durrine — 1850  
Branch Miller — 1851  
Grace Elizabeth — 1852  
May Flora — 1854  
Nancy Ann ("Annie") — 1855  
Edmona — 1856  
William Augustus — 1858  
Nina Ausley — 1860

1 - 1. John R. Drish married Sallie B. Moseley first and at her death he took as his second wife, Estelle Moseley. It is not known the relationship of the two Moseleys. He graduated from the University of Alabama with an A. B. degree. Having acquired military training, he drilled some of the troops of Alabama in the first year of the war between the states. He was offered rank of Colonel at 21 years of age but declined. He later went to the front as a captain in the 45th Alabama Regiment of Volunteers, being assigned to the Cheatham Brigade. He was made prisoner after a brilliant charge on the breastworks of the Yankees at the bloody battle of Franklin, Tenn. He was sent to Johnson's Island to remain in prison until the close of the war. After the war he was a cotton planter, merchant, book-keeper, and teacher from 1865 to 1885. He later became a Methodist minister.

1 - 2. Edmund Woodson Drish lived with his grandfather Drish (as did John) when a child; married Jane Mooer in 1866; attended the University of Alabama but when war broke out he withdrew from school and joined Lumsden's Battery where he was stationed at Fort Morgan on Mobile Bay. He served there until war's end, after which he became a Presbyterian minister. His charges were at Enterprise and Marion in Alabama and Cumberland, Mississippi.

1 - 3. Frederic Durrine married Nellie Moise Levy in 1850. His early childhood was spent in New Orleans where during the war he was with his family on the plantation. In the fall of 1866, the family moved to the city where he attended the Jesuit College. Later, he attended a private school taught by a Mr. Ferrer. He worked as a clerk in the law office of Lea, Finney, and Miller; studied and attended the Law Department, University of Louisiana (now Tulane) and graduated in the class of 1871-72. In 1888, Governor Frank Nichols appointed him judge of the District Civil Court, Division B for the parish of New Orleans — was re-appointed twice after the office became elective. He held the office for 33 years.

His children were:

Frederick de Layback — 1889  
Baruch M. — 1890 - 1892  
Eleanor M. — 1891 - 1892  
Henry C. Miller — 1893

3 - 1. Frederick de Layback King married Eola Fell of Pensacola, Florida (1915). He was educated at Covington, La. and Tulane University, specializing in Engineering; served as Assistant Engineer of the Levee Board and with Col. Lewis closed the crevess in Plaquemine Parish; was Assistant Construction Engineer of the New Orleans R. R. and Light Company. He was a WW I veteran, being appointed to the Engineer's Reserve Corps (1917) stationed in Camp Ft. Logan H. Root in Arkansas and in Ft. Leavenworth, Kansas. This family had one child: Frederick de Layback III.

As indicated by dates above, both Baruch and Eleanor King died very young. No cause of death was found.

3 - 4. Henry C. Miller King married Katherine Richardson (1916) daughter of Sallie Pasteur and Frank Rivers Richardson. He was educated at Dixon's Academy and St. Pauls Benedict College and at Columbia Military College in Tennessee. He was a World War I veteran where he served nine months on the Mexican border with Battery C Washington Artillery; was discharged on account of injury received while on duty — sent home and assigned to Military Police. After the war he was a merchant dealing in automobiles, and lived in New Orleans. His children were:

Frank Rivers Richardson — 1920  
Katherine (Mrs. Stephens)  
Barbara (Mrs. Robert Baugh)

Barbara Baugh lives in Decatur, Alabama and has contributed information concerning her family.

Her children are:

Robert Richardson King Baugh — October 30, 1956  
Cynthia King Baugh

Children of James and Katherine King Stephens  
James Scott Stephens — January 25, 1960  
Katherine Stephens — August 11, 1963

Child of Rivers Richardson King  
Margaret Elizabeth King — June 18, 1962

1 - 4. Branch Miller King, 1851-1905, was educated and lived in New Orleans all his life; was of the firm, *Flowers, Putman and King*; a leading merchant of the city; a social leader who belonged to the "Pickwick Club" and "Comus," the oldest and most prominent carnival organization. He took an active part in the reconstruction period and was in the night attack on the police station at Jackson Square in 1872 — was taken prisoner but was released the next morning by Lt. Charles King. During Governor Nicholl's administration he was a member of the State Board of Health; a member of the first Dock Board who built most of the warehouses and docks on the river front. As the city had no money to pay the contractor, he and Hugh McClosky guaranteed money to the extent of \$380,000 and the work was completed. One of the docks from Canal to Conti Streets was named in his honor. He opposed the Louisiana State Lottery; started the only newspaper in the state. He lived with his mother and sisters and never married.

1 - 5. Grace Elizabeth King, 1852-1932, was born and reared in New Orleans; lived all her life there except during the war when she was with her parents on their Bayou Lembaras Plantation, St. Martin Parish. She was always a student of history and literature; attended a school where French and English were taught under the supervision of a Miss Cavas on the corner of Esplande and Clairbone Streets. Around 1887 she started writing stories and became a well known authoress. An account of her writing can be found in *Library of*

*Southern Literature*, compiled by Edwin A. Alderman, Joel Chandler Harris, and Charles William Keat (Vol. J.O.-L.U., p. 2927). She was educated by private tutors and in Creole schools, becoming fluent in French, German, and Spanish. She served as vice-president and secretary of the Louisiana Historical Society; was a member of several French and American Literary Societies; traveled extensively in Europe; was highly esteemed and admired by people in New Orleans. She lived with her sisters and their home was visited by distinguished people who came to the city on business or pleasure, particularly authors. Among the magazines to which she contributed in her early writings was *Harper's Weekly*. Several publications dealt with the area of New Orleans such as: *New Orleans, the Place and the People* (1895), *School History of Louisiana*, and *Old Creole Families of New Orleans*. There is a public school in New Orleans named in her honor. At her death in 1932, she was buried in Metarie Cemetery.

1 - 6. May Flora King, 1854-1920. Born and educated in New Orleans; was considered a Belle in New Orleans society; a handsome lady who married F. Brevard McDowell of Charlotte, North Carolina on January 9, 1884. Thereafter she lived in Charlotte, and occupied a high social position. She and her husband traveled extensively in Europe and America and she tried to visit the old home in New Orleans at least once each year. The couple had no children and at her death on January 2, 1920 she was buried in the McDowell family plot in Charlotte.

1 - 7. Nancy Ragan King, 1855-1933. Born, reared, and educated in New Orleans. She lived with her sisters and she, too, occupied a high social position. She spoke German, French, and Spanish and because of this she was employed by the government during the world war. The Mt. Vernon Ladies Association appointed one lady from each state to take charge of Washington's home, Mt. Vernon. The appointment was for life and once a year she represented Louisiana for several weeks at Mt. Vernon. She was a member of the Louisiana Historical Society and the leading French and Spanish Literary Societies. She never married.

1 - 8. Edmona King, 1856-?, died before maturity.

1 - 9. William Augustus King, 1858-1901. Born, lived, and educated in New Orleans. He was in the cotton business and had charge of the old Natches cotton presses in the Third District of New Orleans. When these presses were sold to the New Orleans and North Eastern Railroad Company, he was placed in charge of a cotton press in Greenville, Miss. After a few years he returned to New Orleans and became a newspaper reporter with the *Times Democrat*. He married Miss Jennie Conner, daughter of James Conner of Bladen Springs, Alabama. She died in 1916. Their children were:

Carleton King — 1894  
Brevard McDowell King — 1894  
Grace Elizabeth King — 1897  
Warrene Anderson King — 1899

9 - 1. After the death of his father, Carleton (at age 9) went to live with his grandmother, Mrs. Sarah Ann King, his uncle Branch, and aunts — Grace, Nan, and Nina King. He went to Europe with his aunts and while there completed his education at Canterbury, England. In 1916 he entered the army and served in the Field Artillery with a New York regiment on the Mexican border. In 1917 he transferred to air service and after taking a course in aeronautics at Princeton University and instruction in flying at Arcadia, Florida he was a recognized pilot and was licensed as such. He later became a promoter and a broker. On February 2, 1927, he married Allene Adams King, widow of Frank Ragan King, Jr.

The issue of this marriage was a daughter, Grace.

9 - 2. Brevard M. King married Miss Margaret Elizabella Dowdy of Lexington, Texas. He was engaged in raising cattle and farming.

Children of this marriage were:

Wm. Carroll King (1917) M. Cecelia Brown.

Issue of this marriage: Julia Carolyn King.  
Clara Grace King (1924) M. Roderick D. Holcombe (1942).

Issue of this marriage:  
Roderick Wayne Holcombe (1944).  
M. Margaret Christine Laws (1973).

9 - 2. Grace King was named after her talented aunt. She attended school in New Orleans but finished her education at a Baptist college while living in the old home of her great grandfather Edmund King at Montevallo, Alabama. She later lived with her brother Brevard in Lexington, Texas. She married in 1921, R. D. Hurst of Giddings, Texas. No record of children.

9 - 4. Warrene King lived with the Misses Kings at 1749 Coliseum St., New Orleans. She died there at age seventeen and is buried in the Metarie Cemetery by the side of her father.

1 - 10. Nina Ansley King, 1860-? Born in New Orleans; educated at a school kept by Miss Meta Huger on St. Charles Street; attended Sophie Newcomb College where she took pottery, art, and book binding. She lived with her sisters and enjoyed a high social position. She was a member of Trinity Episcopal Church and devoted much of her time to church and charitable work. Traveled in Europe. Never married.

Thus ends the available information on the descendants of the first son of Edmund King, Jr.

\* \* \*

#### \*2. *Louisa King*

The children of Louisa and William Acklen were three:

Theodore, 1832-1861

William, 1840-1862

Harriet Corrine, 1836-1915

It has been noted that Louisa died of a broken heart when son William was killed during the war.

2 - 1. Theodore lived in Huntsville and had several children but no information concerning them was located.

2 - 3. Corrine married Walter Goodman, a prominent merchant of Memphis, Tennessee and was a leader in the social life of Memphis. As a young lady, Corrine was a reigning belle in Washington during President Buchanan's administration. A description of her at that time can be found in a book entitled, *Belles of the Fifties*. She spent the winter of 1854 with her uncle William Woodson in New Orleans and attended a ball given by John Slidell (U. S. Senator) and attracted much admiration. In Washington, when chaperoned by Mrs. C. Clay of Alabama, and in New Orleans as guest of her uncle, she was a great social success. A Memphis paper, at her death, had this to say:

"Few were so much admired and beloved. Those who were so fortunate as to be admitted to her presence in her declining years, which were passed in the seclusion of her beautiful home on Peabody Avenue found no difficulty in realizing that this beautiful old lady of the old regime had been irresistible in her youth for she never lost her charm, nor her gracious dignity. The civilization which produced her is passing away."

She died at age 79. Of this marriage there were four children:  
Louisa  
Corrine  
Norma  
Walter

The only available information indicates they lived in or around Memphis.

### \*3. *Elizabeth King, 1817-1905*

Children of Elizabeth and George Shortridge were:

- 3 - 1. George Jr., 1837-1868
- 3 - 2. Louisa, 1841-1915
- 3 - 3. Eli, 1844-1862
- 3 - 4. Frank, 1845-1864
- 3 - 5. Leila, 1849
- 3 - 6. William Webb, 1852-1888

3 - 1. George Shortridge, Jr. had just been admitted to the practice of law when the Civil War broke out. He joined the service and became First Lieutenant of the Magnolia Cadets (Selma). He survived the war but lost a leg in battle. He returned to Montevallo where he died shortly afterwards. He was survived by his wife, the former Victoria Echols and three children:

Elizabeth Shortridge, 1863-  
Eli Shortridge, 1864-  
Marie Shortridge, 1866-

There was no available information on Elizabeth, she apparently died while young.

Eli Shortridge was named for his uncle who was killed in the Civil War. He was associated with the Alabama Great Southern Railroad. He married Mamie Beauchamp. From this marriage there was a daughter, Maxine, who married Clarence C. Lonnergan of Birmingham. The Lonnergans had one child — a daughter, Jo Ann who, at the time of writing, lives in Eclectic, Alabama.

Marie Shortridge married John Morrison, a successful businessman of Ensley. Children of this marriage were:

Truman Morrison  
Earl Morrison  
Bessie Morrison

Truman Morrison was named after his uncle, Truman Aldredge, who was associated with the coal mines near Montevallo and at Blocton, Alabama.

It was the writer's pleasure to know and consult with Bessie, who provided much information on descendants of the King family. At the time of writing, she is 85 years of age and is most interested in the projects concerning her family.

The George Shortridge, Jr. family had moved into the "mansion house" while the men were away at war, and it was here that Marie (Bessie's mother) was born. Bessie was always ready to sit and listen to stories told by her grandmother Victoria about the war. One such story concerned the time of Wilson's raiders when they occupied Kingswood. Victoria had heard some of the troops coming and hid under a bridge. There she shook with fear as she listened to the soldiers talk about what should be done to the people in the area. Fortunately no harm came to the family but Victoria often referred to the soldiers as "bums." Victoria sold her cotton and had a trunkful of Confederate money, which Bessie remembers playing with but which unfortunately after the war was worthless. This left the family quite poor so Marie (Bessie's mother) was sent to Texas to live with her Aunt Leila (Mrs. Sedberry) and Aunt Louisa (Mrs. Gaines). When Marie returned to Montevallo as a young lady, she met and married John Morrison who was superintendent of the mines at Blocton. This was where Bessie was born. She tells coyly of her parents sending her to Texas to keep her from marrying so young. But very soon after she returned to Alabama she married Howard Eugene Mussey. June 27, 1912 —

Their first child, a girl, died at birth. Their son was named for his father, Howard Eugene Mussey III. He served as Captain in the Air Force. At her request, the portraits of Bessie and her son hang in King House. Before marriage however, she graduated from Hannum Private School, attended Pollock Stevens in Birmingham and Newcomb College in New Orleans. At her husband's death she owned much property on Route 1 Helena, called Mussey Brook Farm. She owned and operated *The Connoisseur Shop, Bessie Mussey, Inc.* at 2423 Canterbury Road in Mountain Brook, and became an authority on antiques and Art. Several pieces of her furniture were donated to King House.\*

3 - 2. Louisa Shortridge, 1841-1915

The eldest daughter of Judge Shortridge; a noted belle in her day; a social leader who married Reuben R. Gaines of Choctaw County, Alabama. He practiced law; served on General Joe Wheeler's staff during the Civil War and was wounded. In 1866 the family moved to Texas where Reuben's career was unusually brilliant and successful. They resided in Austin where he became Chief Justice of the state of Texas. Two years later (1870) Elizabeth King Shortridge, Louisa's mother, left the old homestead in Montevallo to make her home in Austin with Louisa. No doubt the memory of losing two bright young sons in the war, as well as losing her beloved father whom she patiently nursed so long, played a part in her decision. She was apparently happy and well there for she lived to a ripe old age of 88.

The Gaines had one child — Leila. Leila married J. Temple Gwaltney who was a member of the New York Stock Exchange and was also president of the Cotton Exchange.

3 - 3. Eli Shortridge, 1844-1862

Was killed at the battle of Seven Pines, Virginia CSA; buried in the family cemetery in Montevallo.

3 - 4. Frank Shortridge, 1845-1864

Was killed at the Battle of Atlanta; buried in Montevallo.

3 - 5. Leila Shortridge

Married Montgomery George, a lawyer of much promise, of Virginia. They lived in Jefferson, Texas where he died in 1873. She then lived with sister Louisa for a short time, after which she married Mr. Sedberry, a prominent druggist where they lived in Jefferson, Texas. No record of children was found.

3 - 6. William Webb Shortridge

Born at Montevallo; attended private schools for a time, afterwards taught by Prof. John Massey at Summerfield, Mass., was admitted to the bar in 1872, at age 20. At age 18, he came home from

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\*Bessie Mussey died in November, 1975.

school and married his brother George's widow who was older than he. One wonders if it were real love or a sense of duty as Mrs. Mussey, who was very fond of — and close to — her grandmother spoke of him as having a "roving eye." A conjecture might be that he did feel some responsibility for Victoria and the children since the year 1870 brought so many changes. His father, George Shortridge, Sr., died and his mother moved to Texas to live with daughter Louisa. This would have left Victoria and the children at the old homestead as they had been living there. So the marriage took place in the same year and they lived at Kingswood for three years. In 1873 they moved to Birmingham for a short time, then back to Shelby County. In 1889 the family moved to Woodstock but again moved to Ensley where he practiced law. Evidently they settled for good in Birmingham as a funeral announcement for Victoria indicates that she had been a resident of the city for forty years.

From a Birmingham Newspaper July 11, 1930:

"The funeral of Mrs. Victoria E. Shortridge, 84, who died Thursday night at the residence of Mrs. T. H. McGahey, 112 South 12th Street, West End, will be held at 10:00 a.m. Saturday at Brown's Chapel with burial in Elmwood Cemetery. Mrs. Shortridge, a resident of Birmingham forty years, is survived by three daughters, Mrs. John Morrison, Ensley; Miss Naomi Shortridge, Birmingham; and Mrs. R. D. Martin, Alexander, Louisiana; two sons, Eli Shortridge of Birmingham, and W. W. Shortridge, Meridian, Mississippi, several grandchildren and great grandchildren. Active pallbearers will be Carl McCool, R. M. Jones, J. J. Rhodes and three grandsons, Truman A. Morrison, Earl Morrison and Clarence E. Lonnergan."

Whatever the relationship between Victoria and William Webb, the marriage held and they had a family of their own. According to a biographical sketch, "He is a quiet and worthy citizen in all the relations of life and fulfills duty, both private and public with the same fidelity that has always distinguished the members of his family." Always a democrat, he was active in behalf of his party; was an adherent of the Methodist Episcopal Church and his fraternal connections were with the Woodmen of the World and Maccabees. Children of Victoria and William Webb:

Lucille Shortridge  
Naomi Shortridge  
Lelia Shortridge  
Frank Shortridge  
William Webb Shortridge Jr.

\*4. *Edmund Thomas King* 1823-1912

Married Margaret Marsh in 1857.

Children:

Edmund King 1861-?  
Henry Allen King 1866-?

4 - 1. Edmund King lived in Martin Parish, Louisiana; married Caprinne Ballot. They had one son, Henry King, who was in Government service in Panama in 1922.

4 - 2. Henry Allen King was educated at the University of Alabama and took a medical course at Tulane. Upon graduation, he practiced medicine in New Iberia, Louisiana for many years. Later he moved to Baton Rouge where he and his brother-in-law, Dr. Chamberlain, operated a sanitarium. He married Sue Devall Chamberlain, daughter of W. B. Chamberlain and Sue Devall of Baton Rouge on August 27, 1904.

Children:

Henry Allen King, Jr. 1905-  
Sue Chamberlain King 1913-  
Benjamin C. King 1915-

\*5. *Peyton Griffin King* 1826-1893

Born in Montevallo; married June 26, 1866 to Mary Alabama Tarrant of Jonesboro, Ala. She received her name *Alabama* because she was the first child of her parents to be born in this state. She was beautiful in appearance and accomplished in piano and voice. Children of Peyton and Alabama King:

Rosa Augusta King 1867-1889  
Mary Etta King 1870-1910  
Peyton Tarrant King 1872-1873  
Percy Tarrant King 1875-1912  
William Frank King 1877-  
Fannie Salome King 1879-1881  
Peyton Henley King 1881-1952  
Alabama Lucille King 1884-  
Eleanor King 1888-1907

5 - 1. Rosa Augusta King. Born in Jonesboro; a beautiful girl and talented artist who devoted so much time to her art that it impaired her health. She was not married but was engaged at the time of her death at the family summer home in Blount Springs, Alabama at age 22. She is buried in Oak Hill Cemetery in Birmingham.

5 - 2. Mary Etta King. Was born at "Cedar Branch," the King homestead at Avondale; was married at the Church of the Advent on April 25, 1889 to Richard Rutherford Randolph, by the Reverend Thomas Beard. She studied voice and piano; was one of the most beloved and admired women of Birmingham; beautiful in character and person, doing much work for the uplifting of her fellow citizens. She was organizer and first president of the Jefferson County School Improvement Association and made a welcome address to the educators of Alabama at their annual meeting in Birmingham. She was

one of the founders of the Mercy Home Industrial School for girls and was its first secretary; twice president of the Clonian Literary Club and very active in church affairs. Soon after her marriage her mother died, leaving five young children—the youngest was only nine months old. She took these children into her home and reared them as her own. One of these "adopted" daughters, Mrs. C. M. Hanley, remembers her with these words, "As a daughter, wife, and mother she was ideal."

Children:

Helen Rosa Randolph 1890-1945  
Florence Hortense Randolph 1892-  
Richard R. Randolph, Jr. 1900-  
Mary Etta Randolph 1903-

Helen Rosa married Thomas Alexander Murphree April 25, 1914 at St. Mary's-on-the-Highlands, using the same minister who officiated at her mother's wedding and on the same day of the month. She was a graduate of Briston School in Washington, D. C. and made her formal debut at the Birmingham Country Club; took an active part in Red Cross during World War II.

Child: Florence Murphree Thomas who married Harry Wheelock.

Florence Hortense Randolph — born in 1892; died while a baby; buried in Birmingham.

Richard Rutherford Randolph, Jr. graduated from the University of Alabama with a degree in Hydraulic Engineering; worked at Panama Canal; married Lillian Fant.

Children:

Richard R. Randolph III  
John N. Randolph

Mary Etta Randolph attended Salem Academy and College, Winston Salem, North Carolina and the University of Alabama; member of the Junior League of Birmingham; an artist of note, having won fourth prize in a national contest sponsored by the Birmingham Chamber of Commerce; married Stephen B. Coleman, attorney-at-law.

Children:

Helen Rosa Coleman  
Stephen B. Coleman Jr. 1941-

Helen Rosa Coleman married James Jackson Monaghan and they reside in Birmingham.

Children of this family:

Marietta Coleman Monaghan  
Catherine Beverly Monaghan  
Anne Frances Monaghan  
Helen Rosa Monaghan  
James Jackson Monaghan, Jr.  
Barney Andrew Monaghan

Stephen B. Coleman, Jr. married Sandra S. Vandiver of Greensboro, North Carolina.

5 - 3. Peyton Tarrant King 1872-1873. Died in infancy.

5 - 4. Percy Tarrant King 1875-1911

After his mother's death, he lived with his aunt Mary Etta Randolph; was described as being blond, very tall, amiable disposition; later lived in Memphis, New Orleans, and New York where he died and is buried in Greenwood Cemetery. He did not marry.

5 - 5. William Frank King 1877-

Born at Cedar Branch Estate; reared by sister Mary Etta; married Caroline Smith, a descendant of the first governor of Texas; served in the Spanish-American War as a member of the "Jefferson Volunteers" but was not in active fighting; went to St. Louis, Missouri and became superintendent of mills of Acme Cement Plaster Company. He moved to Oklahoma City where he was engaged in real estate and oil well businesses; later moved to Pensacola, Fla. Was described as being 6' 3" tall — brown hair and eyes.

Children:

Eleanor King 1909-

William Frank King, Jr. 1911 -

Mary Etta King 1912-

Riley Smith King 1915-

Riley was the winner of a purple heart in World War II.

5 - 6. Fannie Salome King 1879-1881

5 - 7. Peyton Henley King 1881-1952

Was named for his cousin who was the family physician; lived early years with Aunt Mary Etta; educated in Birmingham schools; went to Oklahoma to join brother Frank and worked for Acme Company, later was employed by "Certain-Tweed Products Corporation" of Acme, Texas. At completion of 25 years service he was presented a gold watch and a button with five stars as a token of esteem and appreciation for his faithful service. No record of marriage was available.

5 - 8. Alabama Lucille King 1884

Reared by sister Mary Etta; educated in Birmingham; made her formal debut at a beautiful reception and evening "Bal Masque" on New Year's Eve 1903 at the Hotel Hillman; married Claude Monroe Hanley; followed by a reception at the Randolph home. After a wedding trip to Seattle, they settled in Tacoma, Washington. In 1912 they moved to New York where she was active in the DAR, UDC, Dixie Club of New York, Inc. and Alabamians-in-New York.

Children:

Richard Bowen Hanley 1910 -

Alabama King Hanley 1914 -

Richard B. Hanley married Helen Bloomer. They had one child: Kate — born 1953.

Alabama King Hanley married John Winston Mayo. They had one child, Alfred King Mayo, born August 1943 in New York.

5 - 9. Eleanor King 1887-1907

At nine months of age was taken to live with sister Mary Etta; was educated in public schools — a talented young lady who studied and appreciated art. She died of typhoid fever when only eighteen years of age and is buried in Oak Hill Cemetery in Birmingham.

\*6. Nathaniel King 1831-1863

Born in Montevallo; attended University of Alabama where he graduated with honors; a young man of superior intellect; liberally educated; traveled in Europe; married Salome Elizabeth Sibley March 4, 1857. He died of tuberculosis at age 32 in Montevallo after which his widow moved to Baldwin County. She died there in 1893.

Children:

Mary Etta King 1858-1901  
Idyl King 1862-1939  
Sibley Paul King 1860-1939  
Nathalie R. King 1863 -

6 - 1. After her father's death, at age 12, Mary Etta lived with her uncle William Woodson in New Orleans. She was educated in the best schools of the city after which she returned to Alabama. In 1890, she married William Moses King who was said to be a distant cousin. They lived in Greensboro, Alabama where she died in 1901 and was buried there. Her husband died in 1913.

Child: Harvey King; born in Oneonta, Alabama — July 16, 1891. He married a Miss Florence of Wilkinson, Virginia.

6 - 2. Idyl King

Born in Baldwin County, Alabama; was married at a youthful age to William Edwin Sorsby and moved to East Lake in Jefferson County; inherited a love of state and country from her parents which resulted in many contributions to her native state — perhaps the most memorable being the recognition and celebration of Alabama Day. From Floelle Youngblood Bonner's article in the *Daughters of the American Revolution Magazine*, December 14 was the dream of a birthday for Alabama by Idle K. Sorsby. It seems that while still a little girl who loved birthday parties, she was sad because her beloved Alabama did not have a party each year as she did. Years passed and the little plantation girl became a southern beauty and the young lady pursued her dream. From her own pen in writing the origin of Alabama Day she writes, "The quaint idea of personifying the State and giving real birthday parties — using cake and candles — had its origin in childhood and memory flits back to the party when I wore a wreath of golden jessamine blossoms and revel'd in the trills of

mockingbirds in spring time." December 14, 1899 was the public adoption and first formal celebration of Alabama Day in Birmingham. As to her personal qualities, she was educated by governesses from the North and from Europe; later attended Mrs. Lanes' School in Kentucky where she graduated as valedictorian of her class; described by her peers as beautiful, vivacious, gracious, charmingly cultivated and popular. In 1897, she founded the Pierian Club of East Lake and the history department of the Women's Club of Birmingham; was vice-president of the Alabama Historical Society; succeeded in getting the Alabama Education Association to adopt Alabama Day and in getting the state legislature to adopt a resolution formally recognizing the anniversary of the state's admission to the union December 14 as Alabama Day. Her dream had come true. Forgetting not her city, she designed a flag which was accepted as the official City of Birmingham flag. She was interested in getting the name of Reynold's Hall changed to Edmund King Hall but that project did not mature.

Child: Paul Clinton Sorsby. Was a graduate of Auburn and in 1925 was working at the International G. Electric Company in Japan.

#### 6 - 3. Sibley Paul King 1861-1939.

Born at Shelby Mills in Baldwin County, Alabama June 5, 1861; a graduate of South Carolina College after receiving early education from governesses, Barton Academy in Mobile and a military academy; held an office in the national guard. Business connections included real estate; banking and manufacturing interests; a democrat; an Odd-fellow; a Hoo-Hoo; and a member of leading business and civic organizations of his city. No marriage record available.

#### 6 - 4. Nathalie R. King 1863-

Born at Montevallo at the old homestead (the year her father died). She married Charles F. Warriner of Jacksonville, Florida.

##### Children:

Olga Warriner 1889. Married Anderson S. Barnes  
Nathalie Warriner 1890-1890  
Mable Claire Warriner 1891. Married G. Hoyt Smith  
Idyl King Warriner 1903. Married George W. Sears  
Laura Salome Warriner 1893

Olga Warriner and Anderson Sibley Barnes' children were:  
Charles Warriner Barnes. Married Flora Shirley  
Natalie Barnes 1916. Married J. V. West  
Betsy Ann Barnes 1921. Married Barney Webber

Children of Charles W. Barnes and Flora Shirley:  
Charles Anderson Barnes 1947  
Joel Thomas Barnes 1953

Children of Natalie Barnes and Jose V. West:  
Frederic Jose West 1951

Children of Betsy Ann Barnes and Barney H. Webber:  
Charles Jose Webber 1948  
Jeffrey Alan Webber 1950  
Virginia Nell Webber 1954  
Paul Ben Webber 1956

\*7. *Shelby King* 1835-1922

Born in Montevallo; enrolled at Howard College October 6, 1851, but left school March 30th of that year. No reason was given. Very little information was available on Shelby's family. He married Mary C. McClenney while at Howard College. The *Alabama Baptist* of October, 1857 announced the death of Shelby's and Mary's only child at the time—Bettie R., age 13 months, 6 days. He owned and lived on a cotton plantation about five miles from Montevallo for a while but later bought brother Nathaniel's plantation in Newton County, Mississippi. He moved with his family to Marlin, Texas in 1872. As a Baptist minister, he preached in Alabama, Mississippi, and Texas for sixty-three years.

Children:

Mary Catherine King  
Sallie Kate King  
Lelia King  
Cleo King

7 - 1. Mary Catherine married W. B. Jones. They lived in Mexio, Texas.

Children:

Joseph Shelby Jones. Married Elneti Gibbons  
Curren King Jones. Married Lochie B. Paddock  
Rod McClunney Jones. Married Tommie Harris  
Catherine Morine Jones

Children of Curren K. and Lochie Paddock were twins:  
Otis Leonard and Otis Alice

Children of Rod M. and Tommie Harris were:  
Lewis (1917), William D. (1920) and Loretta (1921)

7 - 2. Sally Kate King. Married Dr. H. H. Brown of Yokum, Texas. They had one child: Dr. H. H. Brown, Jr.

7 - 3. Lelia King. Married H. R. Armstrong.

7 - 4. Cleo King. Married a Mr. Jones. It was with Cleo's daughter where Reverend Shelby King spent the last few years of his life. He is not buried in the old family cemetery; perhaps in Texas.

\*8. *Frank Ragan King* 1840-1884

Born, reared, and died in Montevallo. Married Fannie Veda Snodgrass of Scottsboro, Alabama.

Children:

Frances Veda King 1880-  
Morgan King 1882-1884  
Frank Ragan King, Jr. 1883-1919

8 - 1. Frances Veda King. Married Malcom Leonard Mosteller of Prairie City, Iowa. He was a civil engineer where at one time he was chief engineer of railroads in Cuba and the couple lived in Havana. They later lived in New York. After his death, she lived in California and married Guisto Domenico Maggiora. Maggiora was a native of Italy and they went to live in Milan, his home city, for a short time. Unfortunately he was killed in an automobile accident February 21, 1948 after which she returned to the States and resided with her son.

Child: Malcom King Mosteller 1908. Born in Tampico, Mexico; married Margaret Justice Berry December 31, 1939 of Valpariso, Chile—daughter of English parents. He graduated from Harvard Military Academy, Los Angeles, California. In 1940, he traveled on accredited "University Afloat" while on a world cruise. Because of his eyes he had to quit college for a while but returned to studies at the University of California for one year; attended business college later. Because of his eyes he was rejected in all branches of the service.

Child: Malcom 1940.

8 - 2. Morgan King 1882-1884. Died in the second year of life; is buried in the family cemetery in Montevallo.

8 - 3. Frank Ragan, Jr. 1883-1919. Went to school as a child in Scottsboro, Alabama; attended Auburn University; received an appointment to Annapolis in 1903 by Senator Morgan of Alabama. From 1904-1919, he served as Lt. Junior Grade, Lieutenant Commander, Commander on ships — *Arkansas*, *Chesapeake*, *Pennsylvania*, *Concord*, as well as other ships. While on the *St. Paul*, he was assigned to the duty of transporting troops to France in World War I. He was the second sailor to land there. In the summer of 1919, the navy was in the process of removing the many carefully laid mines whose purpose had been to protect the North Sea Harbor from the enemy. Now they had to be removed or rendered inactive so as to provide safe commercial travel. Many ships participated in this task, including the trawler *Richard Bulkely* under the command of Frank R. King. In an interesting article, "Removal of the North Sea Mine Barrage" *National Geographic*, February, 1920 the heroism of Frank King is related. It reads as follows:

"On the 12th of July, two days after the Flamingo was damaged, our most serious accident occurred. Again it was due to a mine fouling a kite. Before the trawler *Richard Bulkely* could take any steps to remedy the situation, the mine exploded and her hull collapsed under the terrific concussion. Within seven minutes the vessel had gone down. The other vessels in the vicinity had cut their sweeps, rushed to her as-

sistance, and succeeded in rescuing all except one officer and six men.

A moment or two before the *Bulkely* had disappeared from sight, one of the inspiring deeds occurred which live forever in our memories and glorify the noblest traditions of the service. A man struggled to the deck, dazed by the shock of the explosion. Seeing that he had no life belt, Commander Frank R. King, U.S.N., took off his own and quickly buckling it about the man, helped him to get clear of the ship before she took her final plunge. A moment later the *Bulkely* had disappeared, carrying down with her, in the vortex of the swirling water, this gallant officer, who gave his life that another might live."

To perpetuate his memory, the Secretary of the Navy, Josephus Daniels, named a destroyer in his honor. His wife christened the ship and received Commander King's Distinguished Service Medal posthumously at the launching. He was married to Allene Adams of Huntsville, Alabama, daughter of David C. and Cornelia Cooper Adams of Tuskegee and Huntsville.

Issue of this marriage:

Frank Ragan King (a daughter who was born after her father's death). She has some interesting stories to tell concerning her masculine name. She married Burton Curry of Tuscaloosa where, at the time of writing, they reside.

Children:

Burton King Curry, November 9, 1950  
Frank Ragan Curry, October 15, 1952



## *King House Restored*

Footsteps and time bore heavily upon the old mansion house and the toll became progressively worse. As enrollment at the college increased, more classroom space was needed and partitions had been added to meet this need. Blackboards and other equipment had been installed. In addition to classrooms, the old building served at different times as an infirmary and home management house for the Home Economics Department. The old plastered walls had been patched and repatched. Fireplaces had been closed and other changes made. Hundreds of students passed through the building unaware of the illustrious family who once resided there. The joys of birth and sadness of death which had occurred within these walls were known by few who sat in these classrooms and yet, it is likely that many sensed a dignity and character reminiscent of the era in which it had its beginning.

There had been some discussion in the past as to the old building's future — if indeed it should have one at all. Its life had been extended once, if not more times, and in 1932 the Alabama Writer's Conclave held a ceremony on campus and placed a handsome bronze tablet on the old house which points out its uniqueness as an historical landmark. This tablet was presented by the descendants of the King family and was unveiled by two young ladies, Helen Rosa Coleman (Mrs. Jack Monaghan of Birmingham) and Frank Ragan King (Mrs. Burton Curry of Tuscaloosa).

As new buildings were erected on campus, classes were moved from the old house and eventually the only service left was the financial aid office for student services.

Came the tenure of the tenth president of this University. It was soon evident that a decision had to be made concerning the old homestead. Tear it down or let it die a slow death — or patch it again for some unknown, as yet, need?

The writer, being interested in history, began asking questions, getting answers, and delving into records which led to an intense desire to restore the old homestead so that it could retain its rightful

place in history. Desire alone, of course, was not enough. Financial aid was to be the big problem. The idea was tossed out and some interest was shown but it was somewhat casual and little action resulted.

More and more people liked the idea but volunteers to help were practically nil. An ally was found in the president's secretary, Joan Gordon, and with two women prodding, the project was put on the agenda of the board meeting. Understandably the board had to justify the use before appropriating money for a project of that magnitude but a farsighted and creative-minded board did agree to provide funds, to at least get the project underway. It is also to their credit that the best available help was secured in order that the restoration be as authentic as possible.

Gene Jones, of the Evan Terry firm in Birmingham was selected as the architect, with Nicholas Holmes of Mobile as the consultant. Mr. Holmes had had much experience in restoring old buildings and it was at his suggestion that a builder with similar experiences be secured. Mr. Lewis Mayson of Mobile was hired and soon he and his crew of experienced carpenters began the job of dismantling the old building. Everything original that could be saved was labeled and put aside. Some of the original hardware was still intact upstairs. Other pieces were reproduced for use downstairs. Some of the original window panes were and are still in use. Mantles needed surprisingly little repair and the square nails on the stairway landing are still visible. The old hand-made brick on the outside would not stand removing so they were left in place and were covered by antique brick reproduced near Williamsburg, Virginia to resemble the original as near as possible.

Application was made—and accepted—for listing in the *National Register of Historic Places* which helped to make the project eligible for partial funding by HUD (Department of Housing and Urban Development). Letting no opportunity pass, the plea was carried to politicians and individuals alike who could lend a helping hand. A reward came in a grant from HUD of \$40,000. An opportunity to participate in the project was granted the Alumni membership which resulted in some donations. Each donor's name was inscribed on a plaque which hangs on the wall in King House (this will be an on-going process). At a total restoration cost of one hundred thousand dollars, it is obvious the need of financial help continues.

Interest increased daily on the project after it got underway. Mr. Mayson was asked to speak to many groups on his findings and evaluation of the old home. Among other things, he found the front and rear rafters of different size. These rafters had been laboriously pitsawed, squared with a broadax, trued with an adz and then sawed with a crosscut saw which involved two men—one standing in a pit and the other on a log or rafter. Apparently no carpenter's level had been used because the southeast corner of the building was six inches higher than the northeast corner. Mayson concluded that

the same journeyman made all the doors, mantles, stairs and window-sills with his own particular ruler because they were all off by the same fraction of an inch. It was thought, too, that the original builder had encountered difficulty with the mud bricks crumbling as the stucco removed was found to have cow hair added which made for more strength and durability.

After the building was dismantled and materials evaluated, re-building began. Although the underpinnings and joists had endured the years surprisingly well, substantial reinforcement was needed and added. The front porch was left off since there was evidence of it being added after the original house was built. Although no information was available on the kitchen, markings were found to indicate that it was apart from the "big" house. Thus, it was erected on the spot and connected to the main house by a covered walkway. With the completion of the physical structure the house became once again, according to Mr. Holmes, likely the only true Federal period style house in the area.

Furnishing the house was no small part of the project. With no information available as to actual furnishings, reliance had to be placed on what might have been. Many hours were spent in researching the Federal period as to the furniture, colors, types of material, carpets, lighting, etc., and only such items which might have been used at that period have been included. Mr. King was a wealthy man and the home was referred to as the mansion house which led the writer to assume that the furnishings were more than ordinary. Too, information found in files at the Archives Building in Montgomery mentioned lovely pieces of furniture in descendants possession in New Orleans which came from the old homestead in Montevallo.

It should be noted here, however, that exceptions had to be made in restoration if the house were to be used for something other than viewing. As a practical move, it was decided by the administration and Board of Trustees to use it as an official guest house of the University as well as for other special events on campus. Because of this, central heating and cooling, electrical lighting, bathroom and kitchen facilities were added with the idea of making them as inconspicuous as possible. As to its use — a report compiled by Joan Gordon for the Board of Trustees gives some idea of its popularity. In part, the report reads:

"King House played host to its first event on September 29, 1973 when the Alumni Board held their annual fall meeting there. Since that time, events scheduled for this facility have averaged ten per month. It has become the hospitality center of the campus as well as being "home" to the guests of the University of Montevallo."

Overnight guests have been numerous and of diversified backgrounds — musicians, poets, professional baseball players, national and international figures, including the U. S. State Department's Soviet Desk encumbent and the U. S. Polish Ambassador, and Fulbright scholars from England, Japan, and the Netherlands.

Reservations for the dining area have numbered in the hundreds. These include campus and local groups such as sororities, fraternities, honor societies, AAUW, AAUP, faculty receptions, Alumni Associations, the Daughters of the American Revolution, Shelby County Historical Society, BPW, and the weekly faculty coffee. Of great interest was the wedding reception for Marilyn Latham (president of the Student Government Association, 1973) and Mike Colson, another University of Montevallo graduate.

And so the "new" old house continues to live and serve. It still receives guests graciously, much as did the family of yore. It is hoped by all who participated in this project that during the next hundred years many more people will be touched by the tradition, love and good will that was so abundantly exhibited in the hearts and home of the illustrious King family of long ago. In the words of Henry Van Dyke:

"I shall grow old  
But never lose life's zest  
Because the road's last turn  
Will be the best."

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